THE Practical Believer.

PART II.

OR, THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

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☞ Through a Mistake there is neither 5*th*. 6*th*. nor 7*th*. Chapters. But tho' in the numbering of the Chapters there is this mistake, yet there is no omission of matter.

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and Born of a Virgin. He was truly Man. And why he was ſo.

Queſt. WHat is the *Second* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. And *in Jeſus Chriſt, his only Son, our Lord.*

Queſt. Jeſus ſignifies a Saviour, from what doth Chriſt ſave us?

Anſw. From two things. 1. Our ſins. 2. Thoſe eternal Torments, which are the Puniſhment of them.

Queſt. If he prove a Saviour to us, muſt he Reform, and ſave us from our ſins?

Anſw. Yes; for this is the main Reaſon, why that Name was given him. *Thou ſhalt call his Name Jeſus, for he ſhall ſave his People from their ſins*, Mat. 1. 21.

Queſt. Will he ſave none from the Puniſhment, but whom he ſaves from the ſins firſt?

Anſw. No; for *except ye Repent, ye ſhall all periſh, Luke* 13. 3. and at laſt he will ſay, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

Queſt. But when once they are delivered from their ſins, they may make ſure of being freed by him from Eternal Death too?

Anſw. Yes; for *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1.

Queſt. Chriſt, ſignifies *anointed* among the *Greeks*, as *Meſſiah* doth among the *Hebrews*; *Meſſiah, if interpreted, being the Chriſt*, or

or anointed, as St. *Andrew* ſaid, *John* 1.41. But what mean you, when you call *Jeſus* the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, that is, the anointed?

Anſw. His being inveſted with the Office of a *Prophet*, to teach his Church; of a *Prieſt*, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it; and of a *King*, to Govern and Protect it.

Queſt. Why do you call ſuch Inveſtiture, his *Anointing?*

Anſw. Becauſe anciently Inveſtitures into theſe Offices, were, according to the *Eaſtern* Cuſtom, by pouring Oyl upon them: as in the caſe of the *Arch-Prophet Eliſha*, 1 *Kings* 19.16. and *High-Prieſt Aaron*, *Lev.* 8. 12. —And in *Kings*, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors note, when they received not their Office and Authority by Succeſſion, but by extraordinary Deſignation; as in the caſe of King *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 16. & 10. 1. and King *David*, 1 *Sam.* 16. 13. Anſwerable to which, *Meſſiah*'s Deſignation to his Office, which was to include all theſe, is call'd his *being Anointed*, Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

Queſt. Was *Chriſt* inveſted in theſe Offices, by pouring Oyl upon him?

Anſw. No, but by pouring a nobler thing, the miraculous Powers and Gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which inſtall'd him, and anſwer'd to their anointing. *God anointed Jeſus with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Power*, Acts 10. 38.

Queſt. Was *Chriſt* in the Office and Quality of a *Prophet*, to teach his Church?

Answ. Yes, *he was a Teacher sent from God*, John 3. 2. *What he said, he spake not of himself, but as the Father gave him Commandment, so he spake*, John 12. 49, 50. So that the People spoke a great truth, when they said, *This is of a truth that Prophet, who was to come into the World*, John 6. 14. Nay, he was not in the rank of an ordinary Prophet, but in a pitch of Eminence, far above all others. For he not only had a Prophetick Spirit resting always on him, which the best of them enjoy'd but on certain times and occasions; but he knew the will of God by Personal Acquaintance, and immediate intuition, not barely at second hand, by the *Message of an Angel*, or by a *Vision*, or a *Dream*, as they all did. *The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John 1. 18. And on this account, among others, of all *Prophets* and Interpreters of God's mind, he alone is call'd *the Word*; because, lying in God's Bosom, he had his mind without any thing intervening, as immediately, as a word expresses ones meaning.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Answ. Whensoever we would know the mind of God, to seek only unto him; and never to hearken to any other New Lights, or Enthusiastical Pretenders. In all times, both in the *Apostles* days, and ours, several Impostors, and false Prophets, have come with pretended Messages, to shew men the will of God, and the way to Happiness.

But

But we are to give ear to none of theſe, this work of communicating God's mind to men, not being left at random, but peculiarly intruſted with *Jeſus Chriſt*, that great Prophet of the Church, who is eſpecially conſtituted by God, and anointed for this purpoſe. *This is my beloved Son*, ſaid God *in the voice from the bright Cloud, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him*, Mat. 17. 5.

Queſt. But how ſhall we do to learn of him, ſince now he is no more among us here on Earth, but is gone to Heaven?

Anſw. Two ways he exerciſes his *Prophetick* Office to communicate the mind of God to us.

1. By the *Scriptures*. What God told him, he firſt by Perſonal Converſe, and afterwards by † *his Spirit leading them into all truth*, told the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*: and they put it in writing, in the Book call'd the *Holy Scriptures*, to be preached and publiſhed to all others, thro' all times. So that when we hear them read, we muſt think we hear *Chriſt* our great *Prophet* ſpeaking to us. And to be debarr'd, or debar our ſelves of the uſe of them, what is it, but to be debarr'd of this great Prophet's free Communication? † Joh. 16. 13.

2. By his *Miniſters*, whom he has left and appointed to declare God's mind to the People in his place. Thus the *Prieſts* were appointed among the *Jews*: *The Prieſts lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge, and the People ſhould*

ſeek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts, Mal. 2. 7. And ſo are *the Miniſters of Chriſt*, among us *Chriſtians*. *Loe! I am with you, teaching them all things whatſoever I have commanded*, and that *always, even to the end of the World.* That is, with you during your own lives, and the Paſtors and Teachers your Succeſſors, for ever after your deaths, *Mat.* 28. 20. So that if we would give ear to *Chriſt*, and own him for the *Prophet* of the Church, we muſt ſeek the mind of God from the Holy Scriptures, and from the mouths of our Biſhops and Paſtors, who are his eſtabliſhed Miniſters, to inculcate and explain thoſe Scriptures.

Queſt. Another Office you ſay he was deſign'd and anointed to, was the Office of a *Prieſt*. Wherein doth that conſiſt?

Anſw. In two things. 1. The *payment of a Price*, to make Reconciliation, and expiate mens ſins with God. And 2. *Interceding* for ever after, that they ſhould have the benefit and bleſſing of it. A *Prophet* is employ'd from God to men, to declare his will and pleaſure to them. But a *Prieſt* is employ'd from men to God, ordain'd, as St. *Paul* ſays, *for men in things pertaining to God*, Heb. 5. 1. So that a *Prieſt* ſtands for the Church, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it.

Queſt. And did *Chriſt* act the part of a *Prieſt* for the Church, paying a Price to make Reconciliation with God, and in virtue

virtue of that to intercede for it?

Anſw. Yes, he reconciled us to God, by dying in our ſtead. *We are reconciled to God, by the death of his Son*: Rom. 5. 10. And being now raiſed from the Dead, he is *entred into Heaven, where he ever lives to make interceſſion for us*: Heb. 7. 25.

Queſt. Doth he intercede, that men may have this Reconciliation, whilſt they go on in ſin?

Anſw. No, but only when they forſake it, and *Repent, that their ſins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. So that till they amend, they muſt never expect that he ſhould move for them.

Queſt. What doth the conſideration of *Chriſt's* Prieſthood teach us?

Anſw. To hope for the Mercy of God for our ſins, upon our true Repentance. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our ſins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And having *him our High-Prieſt, we may draw near with full aſſurance of Faith*, if once *our Hearts are ſprinkled*, and cleanſed *from an evil Conſcience*, Heb. 10. 21, 22. And in general, it teaches us, whenſoever we want any Mercy or Favour from God, to apply to him by *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is anointed to be the ſole Interceſſor, or Great Maſter of Requeſts, from whom he will receive our Prayers.

Queſt. You ſaid, *thirdly*, that *Chriſt* was inveſted with the Office of a *King*

to his Church, what doth that imply?

Answ. *Two* things. 1. That he *govern* it by his Laws, and Officers, the *Bishops* and *Pastors*. 2. That he *protect* it from all visible and invisible Enemies, by his *Spirit* and *Providence*. And both these Parts of *Regal Power*, *Christ* exercises over his Church. *He is our Lord to command, the Head over all things to his Body, which is the Church*, Eph. 1. 22, 23. and sits now as a Protector *at God's Right-hand, till his Enemies be made his Foot-stool*, Psal. 110. 1.

Quest. 'Tis plain he exercises his Kingly Power of Governing us, by his Laws, which are contain'd in the holy *Scriptures*. But doth he also govern his Church by his *Officers*, *viz.* the *Bishops* and *Ministers*, making them his Deputies here on Earth?

Answ. Yes, for they are called *his Pastors*, Eph. 4. 8, 11. which is the Scriptural word for Governours, to *feed*, and to *rule*, being used promiscuously in the holy Language. *That saith of* Cyrus, *he is my Shepherd*; that is, my Deputy in Power, or Substitute in Government. *Isa.* 44. 28. And God *brought* David *to feed* Jacob *his people, and* Israel *his inheritance*; that is, to Rule them: *So he fed them according to the Integrity of his Heart, and guided them according to the skilfulness of his Hand.* Psal. 78. 71, 72. His Ministers are his Substitutes in Government, whom we are to hearken to, and obey in his place. *Know them that are over you in the Lord, and admonish you*;

1 Thess.

1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. and *obey those that have the rule over you, for they watch for your Souls*; Heb. 13. 17.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Answ. To submit to our own Bishops and Ministers, acting for, and under him, as we would to *Christ* himself, if we would own him to be King over us. For they are his Deputies, to Rule the Church in his place. And whilst they act according to his Commission, he Decrees and Sentences, Binds and Looses, Speaks and Acts by them; as every Royal Prince doth by his Representatives and Ministers, in all Authoritative Acts, whereto they are commission'd by him, which, when done by them, have the same Authority and Force, as if performed by himself in Person. And therefore if we reject them in such cases, we shew that we will not have him to Reign over us, *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me*, Luk. 10. 16. And accordingly St. *Paul*, both in *binding* and *loosing*, declares, he acted *in the person of Christ*, 2 Cor. 2. 10. and commends the *Galatians*, *for receiving him as Christ Jesus*, Gal. 4. 14.

but not by the say of Chancellour, I trow.

Quest. And wherein must we shew this Submission?

Answ. In uniting with them in Prayers, and Sacraments; they having the charge of ministring in his Worship and Service, and what he solemnly and openly receives in his Princely Dependancies, being from the

the appropriating these things to the Bps & min.rs of ye Ch. of E. (as it now stands) is the πρῶτον ψεῦδος of ys (otherwise excell.t) Author in these matters.

the Mouths and Mediation of his own Stewards and Officers. In hearkening to their Godly Admonitions, because he has left them to instruct, and rebuke Sinners. In meekly undergoing their deserved Censures, and seeking again the Peace of the Church by true Repentance. And, lastly, in chearfully conforming to all their Church-Laws and Constitutions, when they do not thwart, or oppose his. *Christ* himself, our Soveraign Lord and King, has given Laws for all necessary things; but has left them to regulate Rites and Ceremonies, which are variable matters, and to take care of the Order and Decency of Worship, in the publick Assemblies. *Let every thing be done decently, and in order in the Church*, 1 Cor. 14. 40; is a Precept given to Church-Governours, for they have the care of God's Publick Service. And when they make any innocent, or useful Appointments in these things, we must cheerfully obey and conform our selves. *Obey them that have the Rule or Guidance over you, for they watch for your Souls*, Heb. 13. 17.

Quest. Is it another part of his Kingly Power, to *protect* his Church from all visible and invisible Enemies?

Answ. Yes, he guards it against all *inward*, and invisible Enemies, by his *Spirit*; and from all *outward*, and visible Enemies, by his *Providence*. But the security he gives against these, is not that it shall never be eclipsed

eclipſed and perſecuted, but only that it ſhall never be deſtroyed by them. The Promiſe is, That *the Gates of Hell*, that is, the Powers of *Satan*, and all his wicked inſtruments, *ſhall not prevail againſt the Church*, Matt. 16. 18.

Queſt. What muſt *Chriſt's* protecting his Church teach us?

Anſw. To truſt him with Religion, and not ſin to ſave it in the moſt perillous times. He is more concern'd for his Church, than any of us are, or can be; and he knows how to protect it, without the help of our ſins, or our acting wickedly for it. So that in all ſuch times, we are to practiſe Religion, and do our duty; and then recommend, and truſt the Preſervation of it to his care.

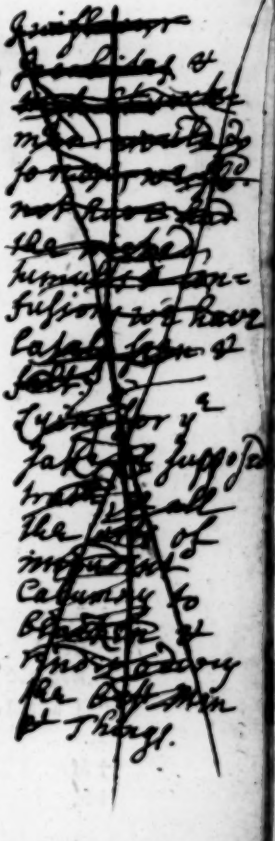
Queſt. If we would own *Chriſt* as our King, then, I perceive, we muſt obey his Laws and Miniſters, and commit our ſelves to him in well-doing, as the Protector of his Church?

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. And will none partake of the Reconciliation of his Prieſthood, but they who thus believe him as their Prophet, and obey him as their Lord?

Anſw. No, for Faith and Obedience are neceſſary to our Peace with God; and there is no injoying the benefit of one, without embracing him in all his Offices.

Queſt. To *believe in Chriſt* then, or to acknowledge *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, is to own



own him for the Prophet of the Church, by hearkning to his Word and Ministers; for the Priest of God, by hoping in him, and applying to God by him, for Reconciliation, and all other mercies; and for the King of his Church, by obeying both his Laws and Officers, and in a course of well-doing, trusting both our selves and our Religion, to his Protection here on Earth.

Answ. Yes.

Quest. What is meant by that, which follows in the Creed, his being *God's only Son*?

Answ. One meaning is, in respect of his *Nature*, that God begat him, as a Father doth a Son, of like nature with himself, so that he is God as well as Man. For *he is equal with God*, Phil. 2. 6. *The true God*; 1 Joh. 5. 20. and *over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. Which last was the special Character and Title of the true God, in the common stile and expression of the *Jews*. Who, from their Custom, when the Priest in the Sanctuary rehearsed the Name of God, of answering, *Blessed be his name for ever*, came in their common speech to call him, *The Blessed One*; by which phrase, the Scriptures often denote him, as in *Mar.* 14. 61. 2 *Cor.* 11. 31. *Rom.* 1. 25. And, agreeable to his having this Divine Nature, we find the Divine Works, as † Creating, and * Sustaining; and Divine Honours, as † *Worship*, and * *Prayers*, and † *Baptism in the Name of the Son*, as well as of

† *Joh.* 1. 3.
* *Heb.* 1. 3
† *Heb.* 1. 6.
* 1 *Cor.* 1. 2.
† *Mat.* 28. 16.

of the *Father*, aſcribed to him in Holy Scripture.

Queſt. Why was it requiſite our Redeemer ſhould be God?

Anſw. 1. To give Merit to his Sacrifice, which was infinitely advanced, in regard his Blood was *the Blood of God*, Act. 20. 28. *How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt purge your Conſciences, who offered himſelf thro' the eternal Spirit*, Heb. 9. 14. As its being committed againſt God, was the extreme aggravation of our ſin: So muſt its being performed by God, be equally an enhanſement of his Reparation. 2. To ſeveral other purpoſes, as to his having Power enough to conquer Death and Hell, and ſave us from all our Spiritual Enemies, to fit him for a capable and competent Judge of all men, ſeeing into their Hearts and Thoughts, which is one of God's Prerogatives. To recommend Vertue as much as was poſſible by an example ſince in him it appears, that all the things required of us, are worthy of the moſt excellent Natures; yea, are not below the practice of God himſelf.

Queſt. What other meaning is there of it?

Anſw. Another is in reſpect of his *Power*, becauſe he is inveſted with all the Authority and Power of God. For *Son of God*, ſignifies ſometimes the ſame as *the Chriſt*; that is, one whom God hath commiſſioned to act in his ſtead. *He ſhall be great, and the*

the Son of the Highest, and God shall give him the Throne of his Father David, Luk. 1. 32. And thus *Jesus Christ* is God's Son; for *he hath given him all Power, both in Heaven and Earth*, Matt. 28. 18. and *committed all Authority to the Son, that all should honour the Son, as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 22, 23.

Quest. And being *the Son of God* in this sense; that is, having Soveraign Power from him, he is our Lord?

Answ. Yes, in respect of this derived Power, and of his own Soveraign Divine Nature, of his invaluable Merit and Purchace, and of our voluntary Compacts and Submissions: on all accounts, that can found a just Dominion, and Lordship over us. *God has given him a Name above every Name, that every Tongue should confess, Jesus Christ is Lord*, Phil. 2. 9, 11. *To us there is one Lord*, 1 Cor. 8. 6.

Quest. And being God, not only in Power, but also in Nature, must we not all worship him, and pray to him, and trust in him as God?

Answ. Yes, for *at the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow*, Phil. 2. 10: and *all must honour the Son, as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 23. This is done by all good Christians, and Saints on Earth, who are styled, They *that call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. 1. 2. And also by those, who are glorified in Heaven, who *sing their Hallelujah's*, as to God the Father, so also to *the Lamb*, Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yea,

by the *Angels* too, *for when he bringeth his firſt-begotten into the world, he ſaith, and let all the Angels of God worſhip him*, Heb. 1. 6. And this Divine Honour, if he were not a God in Nature, as well as in Power, he could never claim, nor receive from them.

Queſt. If *Chriſt* is our Rightful, Sovereign Lord, then we muſt give up our Wills to his, and perform faithfully whatſoever he orders?

Anſw. Yes, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I ſay*, Luk. 6. 46. Nay, ſince he is *our Lord*, and we are his *Houſhold-Servants*, we muſt not, as he ſays, *be the Servants of Men*; that is, ſo wholly given up to their Service, as that we cannot mind his; or ſerve their pleaſure, when it interferes with his Laws; or comply with their Meen and Cuſtoms, when they are contrary unto his; or ſooth and flatter their weak Minds, and feed their ſickly Humours, like timerous or mercenary Slaves. *No man*, ſays our Saviour, *can* thus *ſerve two Maſters*, Matt. 6. 24. *Ye are bought with a price*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *be not ye therefore the Servants of men*, 1 Cor. 7. 23. And *if I yet pleaſed* or ſoothed up *men*, *I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt*, Gal. 1 10.

Queſt. Since he is our Lord, we ſhould not think any thing too mean, or ill for us, which he thought not ſo for him, but compoſe our ſelves to his Behaviour, willingly following where he has gone before; it being

being a ſhame for a Servant to be more nice and delicate, and more hard to pleaſe, than his Maſter?

Anſw. Very right. And accordingly he preſſes us on to thoſe Duties, which otherwiſe we ſhould be moſt like to diſdain and grumble at, by putting us in mind, how he has done, or undergone the ſame himſelf. *If I, your Lord and Maſter, have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet*, Joh. 13. 14. If men *give you hard names*, be content, they have done the ſame to me; and *the Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the Diſciple, that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord*, Matt. 10. 24, 25. He that *would be greateſt amongſt you*, ſaith he again, *let him miniſter moſt*, and ſtrive to be moſt uſeful, *as he that ſerveth; for I am among you as he that ſerveth*, Luk. 22. 26, 27. *Be patient*, when you *are perſecuted, remembring what I ſaid unto you, that the Servant is not greater than his Lord.* Joh. 15. 20. Thus muſt we ſpurn at no condeſcenſions, or labours of Love and Service: no, nor at Reproaches for well-doing, or ſuffering in God's Cauſe; ſince thereby we only wear our Lord's Livery, nay, are made like to him, and follow his ſteps, where he has led the way before us.

Queſt. Since he is the common Lord, both of Maſters and Servants, muſt not this teach us great Moderation and Equity towards our Servants and Dependants, who, however

ever inferior and ſubject they may be in Humane Reſpects, are yet equally near to him, and *Brethren* and *Fellow-ſervants* in reſpect of his Dominion?

Anſw. Yes. God would not permit the *Jews*, to make any of their Brethren Slaves, tho' they might uſe them as Fellow-ſervants, becauſe they were all his Servants. *They are my Servants, which I brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, they ſhall not be ſold as Bondmen*, Lev. 25. 42. And *give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal*, ſaith St *Paul*, *knowing, that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven*, Col. 4. 1.

Queſt. What is the *third* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin Mary.

Queſt. Why muſt *Chriſt*, out of the Natural Courſe of Generation, be born of a Virgin? And why muſt the *Holy Ghoſt* beget him?

Anſw. Becauſe he was to be undefiled from the Womb, and fit to ſatisfie for the ſins of others, having none of his own. *For ſuch an High-Prieſt became us, as was Holy, Undefiled, ſeperate from Sinners*; Heb. 7. 26.

Queſt Was *Chriſt* truly man?

Anſw. Yes, he underwent all the wants of our Natures, for he was hungry, weary, and ſleepy, as we are. And all the Infirmities, for he wept, and was ſorrowful, troubled, and ſore amazed; *He was in all*

points tempted as we are, only without ſin, Heb. 4. 15.

Queſt. Having felt them thus in himſelf, will he not be apt to ſympathize, and have compaſſion on all our weakneſſes?

Anſw. Yes, thereupon the *Apoſtle* argues him to be *ſoon touched with the feeling of our infirmities,* Heb. 4. 15.

Queſt. Why was it requiſite, that to redeem us, the Son of God ſhould become Man?

Anſw. To fit him, 1. To attone and appeaſe God, that Man might gain what Man had loſt, and that by his performing Obedience, he might be capable to reſtore what Diſobedience had forfeited. *As by one man's Diſobedience many were made Sinners, ſo by the Obedience of one, were many to be made Righteous,* Rom. 5. 19. And *we having Fleſh and Blood, he alſo took part of the ſame, that through death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil,* Heb. 2. 14.

2. To be Gentle and Compaſſionate towards us, affectionately interceding for us, and reaſonably bearing with our infirmities. *It behoved him in all things to be like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful, and faithful High-Prieſt,* Heb. 2. 17.

Queſt. How was his becoming man, neceſſary to give him a knowledge and compaſſionate ſenſe of our infirmities; was he not God before? And doth not God, who made our Frame, know our infirmities better, than we who feel them? *Anſw.*

Anſw. Yes, he doth, but on other accounts, as the appeaſing God, becauſe not God, but only Man could ſuffer, and ſatisfie; and man's Obedience was fitteſt to regain what man's Diſobedience had loſt; and it would be moſt eaſie, and favourable to us, that he, who ſhould give Laws to us, and judge us at the laſt, ſhould be a man like our ſelves; it was requiſite the Mediator ſhould be man. And when he was ſo, to make not only his Divinity, that made our Frame, but his Humane Nature too, in which he tranſacts with us, compaſſionate to the utmoſt of our infirmities, 'twas requiſite he ſhould feel them in himſelf; ſince there is no way to make men ſo ſenſible of any infirmities, as their feeling them by ſorrowful experience.

Queſt. What muſt we learn from this Condeſcention of the Son of God?

Anſw. To be humble, and not contemn the pooreſt and meaneſt ſtate, ſince he has dignified it with his Appearance in it. To be Charitable, and Condeſcenſive, and think nothing below us, whereby we may do good. To be content in any ſtate, which God allots for us, thinking the greateſt meaſure of his Love and Tenderneſs, conſiſtent with the greateſt meanneſs of our outward ſtate and circumſtances, as it plainly was in his Son's caſe. Laſtly, To think all wickedneſs, utterly unworthy of our Nature, ſince now God has ſo marvellouſly united it to his own. Theſe, and

ſuch like things, we muſt learn and practiſe from it, if we would be his followers, and ſhew *the ſame mind to be in us, which was before in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 2. 3, 4, 5.

Queſt. Why muſt he be both God and Man, in one Perſon?

Anſw. To fit him for the Office of a Mediator, and Reconciler: who was to go between them, and make them both one. For it was fit he ſhould be nearly allied to each Party, and have intereſt in both of them.

CHAP. II.

Of the Sufferings of Chriſt.

The Contents.

An Account of what Chriſt ſuffer'd, and from whom. Both he, and God the Father were conſenting to it. What he ſuffer'd, was for our ſins, to ſave us from ſuffering for them, when we truly repent of them. Pardon on Repentance, the deſign of his Satisfaction, and the Merit of his Death. This is a Free Grace, which implies that it is not given in Recompence of our Deſerts, not that it requires no Conditions. An Account why God would not grant this Grace of Pardon to Penitents, without Chriſt's dying to ſatisfie for them. And how his Death ſerv'd all the deſigns of God's Juſtice, full as well,

as

as their own would have done. Chriſt's Sacrifice but once offered, but daily commemorated. Several uſeful inferences from Chriſt's dying for us. Chriſt's dead Body was buried. Of his deſcent into Hell.

Queſt. WHat is the *Fourth* Article in the *Creed?*

Anſw. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead, and buried; he deſcended into Hell.*

Queſt. What did *Chriſt* ſuffer?

Anſw. Beſides his previous Sufferings, particularly *in the Garden*, where the wrath of God was ſtrongly repreſented, and Hell let looſe upon him, under which 'tis ſaid, he was *exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*, Mat. 26. 37, 38. and thrown into *an Agony, wherein he ſweat great drops of Blood*, Luke 22. 44. Beſides theſe previous Sufferings, I ſay, he ſuffered alſo after his Apprehenſion all manner of rudeneſs from the inraged *Rabble* and *Soldiery*, who *mocked him*, † *ſpit upon him, buffeted*, and *ſcourged* him; bound his Head about with a * *wreath of ſharp Thorns*, which every where like Darts pierced his tender fleſh; and at laſt, nail'd his Hands and Feet to a Croſs, a moſt acute and lingring Death: and to make that moſt ignominious Suffering more ignominious ſtill, hung him *in the midſt between* † *two Thieves.*

† Mat. 27. 26. 30, 31.
* ver. 29.
† Luk. 23. 33.

Queſt. Who were the Executioners of all theſe Cruelties?

Answ. The *Jewish* Rulers and People went as far in it as they could. But because the *Romans*, who had conquer'd them, had not left among them, as they say, *any Power* and Authority *to put any man to death*, Joh. 18. 31. they drew in *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman Governour*, to sentence his Crucifixion, against his Conscience.

Quest. Did not *Pilate* believe *Christ* to deserve all this?

Answ. No; *he knew they had delivered him for envy*, and malice, *Matt.* 27. 18. He declared he was a *just person*, *Matt.* 27. 24. and that *upon examination*, *he found no fault at all in him*, Luk. 23. 4, 14. No, nor yet *Herod*, when *he sent* him to be judged *by him*, v. 15. But because by their importunity *a tumult was made*, he yielded to pass sentence against him for his own quiet, *Matt.* 27. 24. and *to content the people*, whom he durst not offend, *Mar.* 15. 15. *Luk.* 23. 23, 24.

Quest. What need had he to fear them, that such an abject fear should betray him into so unjust, and vile an Action?

Answ. He had incensed them, and made himself obnoxious to be articled against, by his former violences, being a man very Cruel and Tyrannical, for which, on the complaint of the *Samaritan Jews*, he was presently after removed, as † *Josephus* reports. And in this case, they terrified him moreover, by threatning to accuse him to his jealous Governour, *Tiberius Cæsar*, as no friend to him, for *letting Christ go*, *who called*

† *Antiqu. l.* 18. 5.

called himſelf a King, which, they ſaid, was *ſpeaking againſt* Cæſar, *Joh.* 19. 12.

Queſt. Chriſt did teſtify, indeed, before *Pilate*, that he *was a King*, and that *for this end he came into the World, that he ſhould bear witneſs of this Truth*, Joh. 18. 37. And did not this give *Cæſar* juſt cauſe to be afraid of him?

Anſw. No, becauſe, as he declared, *his Kingdom was not of this World, neither ſhould his Servants fight* for him, as the Subjects of worldly Princes do for them, *Joh.* 18. 36. ſo that he would take nothing from the Emperor, nor pretend to thwart him, or reſiſt his juſt Power. But his Kingdom was in relation to another World, a Spiritual Kingdom, ſet up in men's Hearts, and adminiſtred by the expectation of future Rewards and Puniſhments, leaving Princes ſtill to govern as they did in all the Affairs of this life. And this did not intrench any thing upon the Prerogatives of the preſent Powers, whom he left all in the ſame Authority, and their Subjects under the ſame Duty, as he found them. As *Pilate* plainly perceiv'd by *Chriſt's* Anſwer, wherewith he was ſatisfied, and pronounced him innocent upon it.

Queſt. Theſe Sufferings of *Chriſt* you mention, were moſt barbarous and horrible things. But amidſt all theſe bodily Tortures, had he not eaſe within, and great ſupport of inward ſpiritual Comforts; as he afforded the *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors* afterwards in theirs?

Answ. No, the Horrours of his Mind were beyond the Anguish of his Body, as if he were design'd to suffer the extremity of what Nature could bear. *His Soul was troubled*, Joh. 12. 27. *very heavy*, Mat. 26. 37. *Sore amazed*, Mark 14. 33. *Exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, Mat. 26. 38. and in such an *Agony*, as I noted, at the apprehension of the Divine Wrath he was conflicting with, as put a most unwonted force upon Nature, and made him *sweat as it were great drops of Blood*, Luk. 22. 44. Under all which, he was so over-born with the Burden, that he needed *an Angel to be sent to strengthen him*, v. 43.

Quest. Could *Christ* have avoided these Sufferings, if he would?

Answ. Yes, he could have had *Legions of Angels* for his Rescue, *Matt.* 26. 53. But for our sakes, he voluntarily submitted to them. *I have power to lay down my life, and to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self*, Joh. 10. 18.

Quest. And was God consenting to them?

Answ. Yes, they came about, not only by his Permission, but by his Counsel and Determination. He did no ways excite the *Jews* to this abominable Act; but left them to their own envy and malice, which were more than enough to push them forward. But when they of themselves were wicked enough to do it, he, by his infinite Wisdom, accomplishes what his Son and he had before agreed, *viz.* the working our Redemption

demption by it. He ſuffered according to *what was determined*, Luk. 22. 22. He was *delivered* to them, *by the determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of God*, Acts 2. 23. *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* did only *what his Hand, and Counſel had determined before to be done*, Act. 4. 28. And he *was a Lamb fore-ordain'd to be ſlain, before the foundation of the World*, 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20. His death, and his exaltation therefore to be a *Mediatory King*, and our *Redeemer*, was a Bargain driven, and a Matter concerted long before betwixt him, and his heavenly Father. *My Father hath appointed*, (the word is † covenanted) *to me a Kingdom*, † Διατιθεμαι. that is, in the everlaſting agreement between God and him, it was promiſed as the Reward of his undertaking, *Luk.* 22. 29. And on this account, his Servants are ſaid to be given to him as a Retribution: *He gave himſelf for them*; that is, to purchaſe them, *Tit.* 2. 14. *Thine they were*, ſays he to his *Father*, *and thou gaveſt them me*; that is, on this conſideration, *Joh.* 17. 4, 6.

Queſt. But ſince the things he endured, were the abſolute perfection of ſhame and ſorrow, why ſhould *Chriſt* ſubmit, or God bring *Chriſt* to that end? was it to puniſh his own ſins?

Anſw. No, *he did no ſin*, 1 Pet. 2. 22. *He was tempted in all points* of Natural Infirmities as we are, *but yet without ſin*, Heb. 4. 15.

Queſt.

Queſt. For whoſe ſins was it then; for all *death is the wages of ſin*, *Rom.* 6. 23?

Anſw. For ours, for we had ſinned, and were all to die; but he comes by the Allowance of God, and bears our iniquity, by dying in our place. *God laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Iſa. 53. 6. *He taſted death for every man*, Heb. 2. 9. *He died for our ſins*, 1 Cor. 15. 3. *He poured out his Soul a Sin-Offering*, Iſa. 53. 5, 10.

Queſt. What are we the better for his dying for them?

Anſw. Infinitely the better every way; but particularly, his death will ſave us from dying for them, if we truly repent of them. *He hath redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law*, by *being made a Curſe*; that is, enduring a curſed death, *for us*, Gal. 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 21. He *bought us off* from death by *dying for us*; whence he is called our *Redeemer*, and our *Ranſom*, 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Queſt. But has not his death bought us off from the Puniſhment of our Sins, till we repent of them?

Anſw. No, for we muſt *Repent, and be converted, that our ſins may be blotted out* for his ſake, *Acts* 3. 19. *and being made perfect*; that is, inaugurated into his Princely Power, *by ſuffering, he became the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9.

Queſt. If men remain impenitent then, they muſt die for their own ſins, I perceive, notwithſtanding?

Anſw.

Answ. Yes, *Except they repent, they must all perish*, Luk. 13. 3.

Quest. But since *Christ* hath died for them once already, will not that be dying twice, and so being twice punished for the same sin?

Answ. No, for he profered, and God accepted his death, not as an unlimited exchange for all Sinners, but only for those, who will leave their sins, and repent of them. He died, indeed, *for all men*: but he died as *their Sacrifice*, Eph. 5. 2. and Sacrifices were accepted in lieu only of Penitent Offenders; and as God still told the *Jews*, would never put away sins, without the Repentance of those they were offered for. *To what purpose is the number of your Sacrifices?* said he to those who went on still in their wickedness, *Isa.* 1. 11. *The Sacrifice of God is a broken Spirit*; that is, the Sacrifice God accepts must be accompanied with it; *a broken, and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*, Psal. 51. 17.

Quest. But was not his death a satisfaction for sins? And if he has satisfied for them already, what need we do more? must we satisfie for them again?

Answ. All the fruit, and estimate of his Satisfaction, must be taken from the Argument between God and him. His death, who was an innocent man, would have signified nothing at all towards our release, unless God had been graciously pleased to admit

Agreement

admit of him in commutation, and exchange for our Suffering. It avails, and operates nothing by it ſelf alone, but only ſo far, as God accepted him. And the nature and effect of his Satisfaction, as it was joyntly deſigned and concerted between his Father and him, was not, that no ſinner whatſoever ſhould be accountable for his own ſins, but only that none ſhould, who had repented of them.

Queſt. What then were his merits, or that which he deſerved, and obtained of God for us, by his death?

Anſw. The *Grace and Favour of Repentance*, or, that if we truly repent, we ſhall not die for our ſelves. So St. *Peter* expreſſes that benefit, the *Gentiles* had received, in being admitted Chriſtians: *then hath God alſo to the Gentiles, granted Repentance unto life*, Acts 11. 18. And again, *God exalted him to be a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins*, Acts 5. 31. So that the merit of *Chriſt's* death is the Pardon of all our ſins on true Repentance, and likewiſe the Grace to enable us thus to repent of them.

Queſt. Is this Pardon on Repentance a Grace and Favour, which we needed him to purchaſe for us?

Anſw. Yes, for the Law of Works, which condemned us all, was, *Do this, and live*; not, as thro' *Chriſt* the *Goſpel* is, *either do it, or repent where you fail.* So that God was not bound to pardon Sinners, when they did

did repent. Nay, the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, the maintaining the Authority of his Laws, and the seriousness and veracity of his threatnings, were ready to interpose, and hinder him from doing it. But when *Christ* came to die in our stead, and pay his own Blood, as a price to induce God to pardon Penitents: Then, since he doth it not without such a valuable Recompence, he might pardon them, without any Reflection on those glorious Attributes. And this is the fruit of his Satisfaction, and the Merit and Purchase of his Death, *viz.* the *Favour of Pardon of sin upon Repentance.*

Quest. Is there no other Merit, and Fruit of *Christ's* Death?

Answ. Yes, besides the forgiveness of sin, and the gift of Eternal Life thereupon, he has also merited, as I said, the Grace to procure it. But this is so much favour and indulgence, as he ever sought, or has procured of God, towards the pardon of it.

Quest. But if we cannot partake of the benefit of his death, but upon these terms, how is all the favour we receive by it, said to come *freely*, and to be of *free Grace*?

Answ. Grace may be called *Free*, on *two* accounts; either, as it is not given us *for our deserts*; or, as it is not given *upon any conditions.*

Quest. Is the Grace of God free, in the *first* sense, as that excludes all *Merits*, or so free, as not to be given us for our deserts?

Answ.

Answ. Yes, and this is the *Scripture*-sense of Free-Grace; for there *Free-Grace* is the same as *Undeserved-Grace.*

Quest. How doth that appear?

Answ. Because *Free-Grace* is there opposed to *Boasting*, which has place only on the Plea of Merit or desert. *We are justified freely by his Grace, then where is Boasting? it is thereby excluded*, Rom. 3. 24, 27. And *by Grace ye are saved, not of works*, i. e. by the desert of any works, *lest any man should boast*, Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Quest. If the *Scripture* had been silent, 'tis easie to apprehend this Grace must needs be undeserved by us, because all we can do, is by the help of his Spirit, and is but his just due, which we do not give, but pay as Debters; and were it our own, it is yet defective and mean, and utterly unworthy of so vast a Recompence. But tho' it be thus absolutely undeserved by us, yet has not *Christ* fully merited and deserved it for us?

Answ. Yes, he was bound to nothing, but voluntarily subjected himself to the Law, and took our Nature upon him. All the perfect Obedience he shewed, either in doing or suffering the Will of God, was his free and gratuitous Offering; and was good in the highest degree and perfection; and received an infinite estimate, from the Divinity of his Person; and gratified the Father, in his greatest designs, for his own Glory, and mens Salvation. So that by his

his Services, so free and gratuitous in themselves, and so worthy of the most infinite Recompence, he has justly merited all that Grace, which, for his sake, God bestows on us.

Quest. The Grace of the Gospel, I see, is absolutely free to us in the *first* sense; that is, it comes to us without the least of *our deserts.* But it is also free in the *second*, so as not to require in us any *Terms* or *Conditions*?

Answ. No, for the main instances of God's Grace; that is, of his gratuitous, and undeserved Gifts, are the *forgiveness of sins*, the *saving assistances of his Spirit*, and *Eternal Life:* And all these are given, tho' not for any of our Deserts, yet upon Conditions.

Quest. Is *forgiveness of sins*, one instance of God's Free Grace?

Answ. Yes, *we are justified*, that is, acquitted in judgment, or have our sins pardon'd, *freely by his Grace*, Rom. 3. 24. and *we have forgiveness, according to the riches of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 7.

Quest. And this Grace of Forgiveness, you say, is granted to us on Conditions?

Answ. Yes, on Condition of our *true Repentance.* For we are to *Repent, that our sins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. And *Christ was exalted to be a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of sins*, Act. 5. 31. And when he sends out his *Apostles* to publish this Grace, he orders them to *preach Repentance,*

and

and Remission of sins in his Name, to all Nations, Luk. 24. 47.

Quest. The *saving Assistance of God's holy Spirit*, is another eminent instance of Grace, and is most commonly called so in common speech; but is that given too upon Condition?

Answ. Yes, on condition of our own care, and concurrent endeavours. For tho' the first motions and suggestions of the Spirit, which make the first step in our Conversion, may prevent our endeavours: yet the continuance of them on our Hearts, and their encrease to a saving pitch, that will govern our Lives, and guard us against Temptations depends upon our own Concurrence. *To him that hath*; that is, improves what God bestows, *shall more be given:* but *from him that hath not*, i. e. doth not profit with it, as the wicked Servant did not, *who went, and hid his Talent, shall be taken away even what he hath*, Mat. 25. 25, 29. And when St. *Paul* tells us, *God works in us both to will and to do*; he tells us withal, that we must be *Fellow-workers*, and *work out our own Salvation*, Phil 2. 12, 13.

Quest. Is *Eternal Life* another instance of Free-Grace?

Answ. Yes, it is an instance of it, and the Crown, and consummation of all the rest. It is called the *Gift of God*, Rom. 6. 23. and the *Free gift of God*, Rom. 5. 15, 16, 18.

Quest. And is it also bestow'd upon Conditions?

Answ.

Answ. Yes, upon condition of our Obedience to the Laws of God. *Being made perfect thro' Suffering, Christ became the Author of Eternal Salvation, to those that obey him,* Heb. 5. 9. And *blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life,* Rev. 22. 14.

Quest. The Grace we have by the death of *Christ* then is free, as you say, only as that excludes all our Deserts, but not as it excludes all Terms and Conditions.

Answ. Very right. And this is plain by that way wherein God makes over all that Grace to us, which is by the *New Covenant.* For what is given by way of *Covenant,* is given upon Terms; because Covenants differ from absolute Grants, and imply Articles on both sides. And thus the Benefits of the Gospel are given to us. For *Christ's* sake, we shall receive Remission of sins, the Assistance of the Spirit, and Eternal Life, tho' we never deserved them: but we shall not receive them, unless we Repent, and obey in order to them.

Quest. By this I perceive, the Grace of *Christ* is no encouragement to sin, or slothfulness, and that his dying for our sins, will not save us from dying for them our selves, unless we repent of them?

Answ. Undoubtedly it will not.

Quest. But as soon as ever we repent, we may believe, and trust, that we shall be saved by it?

Answ. Yes; and this is the true *Faith in*

his Blood, that is, a Faith that our Life ſhall be ſpared, and we reconciled to God, for the ſake of it. *God hath ſet forth Chriſt a Propitiation, for the Remiſſion of ſins that are paſs'd, thro' Faith in his Blood*, Rom. 3. 25. But this Faith belongs not to any, whilſt they continue in ſin, and are wicked men, but only when they begin to obey, and ſerve him.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, it appears, that *Chriſt's* great aim in dying for us, was to reclaim us from our ſins, and make us holy and good men: and that he purchaſed Reconciliation, and the favour of God, only to ſhew us it would not be in vain, and to encourage us to become ſo.

Anſw. Yes, ſo it was. For *he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. And *he bare our ſins in his own Body upon the Tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righteouſneſs*, 1 Pet. 2. 24.

Queſt. You ſay *Chriſt* died to atone, and ſatisfie for ſins, that God might pardon us when we repent of them. But why did he not think Repentance enough without a Ranſom? Why would he not pardon Penitents, unleſs *Chriſt* would die to make ſatisfaction for them?

Anſw. Becauſe the requiring ſuch a ſatisfaction, ſhewed his perfect hatred of ſin, which is for the Honour of his Holineſs; and the ſtrict care of his Laws, which maintains

tains the Reputation of his Justice; and took off all hope of impunity, if men shall go on still to transgress, and so was the greatest discouragement to future offences. All which would have been otherwise, had he been easie in forgiving, and admitted of a Reconciliation without a Ransom.

Quest. How doth the requiring such a satisfaction, shew his *perfect hatred of sin*, for the *Honour of his Holiness*?

Answ. Because he would not remit the Punishment of it, but upon the highest Ransom; and because, when he undertook to answer for it, he would not spare it in his own Son, so that his hatred to it could not be overcome even by his love to him. Nay, moreover, because when, in consideration of his infinite Merits, and their Repentance, he returns into favour with them; yet, to shew his absolute detestation of their former sins, he will not receive even the Prayers and Devotions of Penitent Sinners at their own Hands, or treat with them in person, but requires a *Mediator* to offer up, and transact all for them. And withal, admitting no other, either in Heaven or Earth, for that *Advocate*, but only his own eternal, and most dearly beloved Son: To shew, that when they offered the greatest Consideration, yet, in indignation at their former Provocations, he would have no dealings with them by any person, less great, and dear than him.

Quest. How doth it shew his *strict care of*

his Laws, for the *Honour of his Justice*?

Answ. Because he would not dispense with the threatnings of those Laws, where he had no less a Reason, than the Salvation of all men, the greatest and most considerable part of the visible Creation, without a valuable recompence.

Quest. How doth it cut off all *hopes of impunity*, and utterly discourage all future offenders?

Answ. Because God has no more Sons to die for us, and when he was sollicited to remit the punishment of our sins, he would not do it upon a less exchange. When man sinn'd against the Law of unerring Obedience, upon the Merits and Death of his Son, God pardon'd that, and admitted them to favour again upon their Repentance. But if they shall offend against this Law too, and be finally impenitent, there are no Sons of God to suffer again, to purchase their Forgiveness.

Quest. So that *Christ's* Suffering for us, salved all the Honour of God's Attributes, and served all the Purposes of his Justice, that would have been served by our suffering for our selves?

Answ. It did so, and to the full as well too; the punishing of his own Son, when he answered for Sinners, shewing a more implacable hatred of sin, and inexorable Justice, than he could have shewn, by punishing all the World, who were Sinners themselves. And therefore his death was

a

a satisfaction to God, for the sins of the whole World. Not only a satisfaction to Benevolence, and yielding Goodness; as when easy and indulgent Natures, are appeas'd by any small returns, and incompetent Recompences: but a Satisfaction to Justice, by way of full Compensation and Equivalence; *Christ*, by his one suffering displaying the Honour of all God's Attributes as much as God could have display'd them, by punishing the whole Humane Race.

Quest. If the Death and Sacrifice of *Christ*, were so full a satisfaction at first, there is no more now to be paid, and it need never be repeated?

Answ. No, nor ever must it. The *Jewish* Sacrifices, needed constantly to be repeated; because, being of little worth, and very imperfect, their virtue was soon spent; so that *year by year they were continually offered*, Heb. 9. 25. and 10. 1, 3. But his being full and perfect from the first, and leaving nothing to be added, *He is not to be offered often, but at once hath he put away sin, by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 25, 26. and 10. 14. But altho his Sacrifice is no more to be really acted, as it needs not, the whole effect of it being as fresh and full now, as it was at first; yet is it daily still commemorated, and the virtue thereof apply'd, in every *good Prayer*, but especially in every *Sacrament*.

Quest. What learn you from *Christ's* dying a Ransom for our sins?

Answ. 1. To *abhor sin*, since it is so odious to God, that he can spare it in no person, no not in his own Son, when he took other men's sins upon him. And if he spared not him, when he would bear the punishment for us; how can we hope he will in the least spare us, when we come to undergo it for our selves. *If these things were done in the green Tree, what shall be done in the dry*, Luk. 23. 31.

2 To *give our selves* up to the service of *Christ*, who hath bought us for his own property, at so dear a rate. This is the least we can do, in Equity and Justice. *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your Bodies and Spirits, which are God's*, by such costly purchase, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And if there is any spark of Love and Gratitude in our Hearts, we can do no less in Resentment of such stupendious kindness. *For the Love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

Quest. Ought it not also to teach us *Faith in God*, and to beget in us a firm Trust, that he will perform whatsoever he has promised?

Answ. Yes; as plainly shewing, that nothing is too great for his love to make good. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

Quest.

Queſt. Muſt not his *Patience*, and *Charity* in his Sufferings, not *reviling* again, but *praying for his Enemies*, teach us the ſame, when we are called to ſuffer?

Anſw. Yes; for in *ſuffering thus, without threatning*, and *when he was reviled, not reviling again, he hath left us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. 23.

Queſt. Should not God's impoſing ſo many, and great ſecular hardſhips and ſufferings on his own moſt dear Son, make us have eaſier thoughts of theſe things than others have, and *reconcile us to Affliction*?

Anſw. In all Reaſon it ſhould. For it ſhews how inconſiderable worldly Goods and Glories are in Gods Eyes; how temporal evils are allotted to the deareſt perſons, how proper they are to Diſcipline, and improve the moſt virtuous, how they perfect Piety, and what a ſtep they are to Felicity and Glory. *Jeſus himſelf, tho' he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he ſuffered*, Heb. 5. 8. *He was made perfect through ſuffering*, Heb. 2. 10. *He ought to ſuffer, and ſo enter into his Glory*, Luk. 24. 26. *We ſee him for ſuffering death, crowned with Glory and Honour*, Heb. 2. 9. And ſeeing Sufferings, not only thus providentially allotted, but alſo thus profitably undergone, and highly recompenced in him; the bleſſed *Apoſtles* and *primitive Saints*, whoſe Ambition it was to be in all things his true followers, did not repine and mourn, but rejoyce and glory in them.

Quest. And since in dying for us, he has shewed us such stupendious Love, must not that mutually endear us, and teach us if we would be his followers, most tenderly to *love one another*?

Answ. Yes; *if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another*, 1 Joh. 4. 11. Nay, since *hereby we perceive the love of God to us, because he laid down his life for us*; *we ought*, upon just occasion, *to lay down our lives for the Brethren*, 1 Joh. 3. 16.

Quest. In the *Creed*, you say *dead* and *buried*. When *Christ* expired upon the Cross, was his Body taken down, and buried?

Answ. Yes, it was laid in a Tomb, and a great Stone roll'd before its mouth, according to the *Jewish* Custom. And *for fear his Disciples should come by night, and steal him away*, the *Jewish Rulers*, when they *had sealed the Stone*, got a *Guard* from the *Governour* to *watch* it, *Mat.* 27. 64, 66.

Quest. What mean you by *Christ's descent into Hell*?

Answ. His abode in that state of Death and Separation, or his Soul's being in the place of Separate Souls, till it was united again to his Body, at his Resurrection; as it is written, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*, Acts 2. 27. which St. *Peter* there says, was *fulfilled* in the *Resurrection of Christ*, when he ceased to continue under *the power of death*, and gloriously *arose to triumph over it*, v. 30, 31.

Quest.

Quest. Doth the word *Hell*, sometimes signifie only the state of the Dead, or the place of Souls departed?

Answ. Yes, as *David* says of all men, *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of Hell?* Psal. 89. 48. And as *Jacob* talked of *going down to Hell to* Joseph, when he thought *some evil Beast had devoured him*, Gen. 37. 33, 35. In both which places, the word translated *Grave* in our *Bibles*, in the *Greek* is *Hades*, the very word that stands for *Hell* here in the *Creed*. Oft-times, indeed, especially in the *New Testament*, Hell signifies, not in general, the state of the Dead, but particularly the state of the Wicked, and the place of Torment. In which sense it is not likely that *Christ descended into Hell* after his death, because in his dying hour he told the *Penitent Thief*, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, Luk. 23. 43.

CHAP. III.

Of the Resurrection of Christ, and his sitting at God's Right-Hand.

The Contents.

An Account how Christ may be said to have been three days in the Earth. His Resurrection proved. The necessity of it. He ascended

aſcended to Heaven. What is meant by his ſitting at the Right-Hand of God. There he, 1. *Intercedes for us, as our Prieſt. This interceſſion not vocal, by Words and formal Pleas, but by preſenting himſelf, and his own meritorious Sacrifice. He intercedes only for Covenant-Mercies, and on Covenant-Terms. He is an Interceſſor of abſolute Power with God, and trueſt Affection for us. One part of his interceſſion, is to hand and preſent our Prayers to God. Therefore whenſoever we pray for any thing, 'tis both our duty, and wiſdom to apply by him.* 2. *Governs his Church, as a King. In what Acts this conſiſts.* 3. *Inſtructs his Church, as a Prophet, by ſending to it the Holy Ghoſt. Chriſt's Body having now taken up its fixt abode at God's Right-hand, we are not in any Ordinances to expect his Bodily Preſence, but only a Preſence by his Spirit, which is more to be deſired. Some Inferences from Chriſt's ſitting at God's Right-hand.*

Queſt. HOw long did *Jeſus Chriſt* abide in the ſtate of the Dead; till his Body was corrupted?

Anſw. No, he ſtaid not ſo long. *God did not ſuffer his Holy one to ſee Corruption,* Acts 13. 35, 36, 37. but reunited his Soul and Body, and *raiſed him from the dead on the third day,* before the time Corruption uſually ſeizes the Bodies of dead men.

Queſt. Chriſt ſaid of himſelf, as the *Jews* told

told *Pilate*, That *after three days he would riſe again*, Mat. 27. 63. And as *Jonas was three days, and three nights, in the Whales Belly: ſo*, ſays he, *ſhall the Son of Man be three days, and three nights, in the heart of the Earth*, Mat. 12. 40. But if he died as we commemorate his death, upon *Good-Friday*, and roſe † early on *Eaſter-day* in the morning, there were only part of two days, and one entire day between.

† *Mar.* 16. 1, 2.

Anſw. That is, *three days*, according to common computation of days, both Ancient and Modern, and particularly in *Scripture* reckoning. Thus *Lazarus* is ſaid *four days dead*, though the *fourth day*, whereon *Jeſus* raiſed him up, was one of them, *Joh.* 11. 39. And *eight days* are ſaid to be *accompliſhed, for Chriſt's Circumciſion*; but the day of his Birth, and Circumciſion too, went both in to that Reckoning, *Luk.* 2. 21. And the Prieſts in their courſes were appointed, and † reputed, to *Miniſter before the Lord eight days*, though the time of Entrance, and Releaſe, was † *every Sabbath day morning*. And accordingly, what in the currant way of expreſſion, is thus ſometimes termed *three days*, our Saviour ſpeaking more exactly at other times, expreſſes by *on the third*, or *within three days*. *Jeſus ſhewed his Diſciples, he ſhould riſe again the third day*, Mat. 16. 21. and 17. 23. and 20. 19. And, *deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up*, Joh. 2. 19. or, *within three days*, as the *Jews*, who otherwhere

† *Joſeph. Antiqu. l.* 7. *c.* 11. † 2 *King.* 11. 5 7. & 2 *Chron.* 23. 4.

where call it *after three days*, related it, *Mark* 14. 58.

Queſt. How doth it appear, that *Chriſt* was raiſed again *from the dead*?

Anſw. It might appear to any, who had the curioſity to look into the Sepulchre; for they would ſee he was gone.

Queſt. What ſaid the *Watch*, who ſtood to guard him?

Anſw. They knew it full well, for when the *Angel*, with a *Countenance like Lightning*, *deſcended in an Earth-quake*, to *roll back the Stone*, *the Keepers ſaw it*, *and ſhaked*, *and became as dead men*, Mat. 28. 2, 3, 4. But the *Jewiſh Rulers bribed them*, *to ſay*, *his Diſciples came by night*, *and ſtole him away while they ſlept*, v. 11, 12, 13, 14. which was a fooliſh lie, and bore along with it its own Confutation.

Queſt. How ſo?

Anſw. Becauſe, if they were aſleep, how could they tell any one ſtole him? If they had any thoughts of what others did then, it could be only in a Dream; unleſs they would pretend to ſleep with their Senſes awake, and their Eyes open.

Queſt. But *this ſaying*, ſaith St. *Matthew*, *is commonly reported among the* Jews, and paſſes for a Truth with them, *Mat.* 28. 15. And by what other ways can you convince them, that *Chriſt* is riſen?

Anſw. By thoſe that ſaw him, and converſed with him after his *Reſurrection*. For † *Act.* 1. 3. he appeared *for* the ſpace *of* † *forty days* to his

his *Apoſtles*, and to ſatisfie them he had a real Body, *eat and drank with them after he was riſen*, Acts 10. 41. Luk. 24. 43. He appeared to *Thomas*, who ſearched *the holes the Nails had made in his Hands*, and *thruſt his Finger into his Side*, where the Spear had pierced it, before he would *believe* him, *Joh.* 20. 27, 28. *To five hundred Brethren all at one time*, 1 Cor. 15. 6. To *Stephen* in a bright *Glory from Heaven*, at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7. 56. and to *Saul*, at his Converſion, *Acts* 9. 3, 4. Yea, after he was riſen, and gone to Heaven, he *ſent down the Holy Ghoſt* upon his *Apoſtles* and followers, which ſhewed, not only that he is alive again, but alſo that he lives in Power.

Queſt. The *Apoſtles* ſeem extraordinary careful, to confirm the *Reſurrection of Chriſt*, and call *the ordaining one to be an Apoſtle, ordaining him to be a witneſs of it*, Acts 1.22. Was it neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould riſe from the dead?

Anſw. Yes, to ſhew the debt he died for was diſcharged, and that his ſatisfaction was accepted. He died as a Sacrifice, to ſatisfie for our ſins; and till God raiſed him up again, it did not appear that he was ſatisfied with what *Chriſt* had done for us. *If Chriſt be not riſen, ye are yet in your ſins*, 1 Cor. 15. 17.

Queſt. But was not his death a full payment, and, on the *Croſs*, did he not relate to that, when he ſaid *it is finiſhed*, Joh. 19. 30?

Anſw.

Anſw. It was ſo indeed, the price of Redemption then was fully paid. But till he raiſed him up again, God had given no publick Acquittance, nor done any open Act, to ſhew we were diſcharged by it. So that by his Reſurrection, we are ſaid *to be juſtified*, that is, declared to be ſo. *He died for our ſins, and roſe again for our Juſtification*, Rom. 4. 25. and *who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again*, Rom. 8. 34.

Queſt. Was his Reſurrection neceſſary on any other Accounts?

Anſw. Yes; for, 2. In virtue of his death, he was to be our *Mediator*, to intercede with God for us; and our *Saviour* and *Deliverer*, to protect and reſcue us from our Spiritual Enemies: And theſe great works ſuppoſe a live man, and are not to be performed by a dead perſon. And being thus neceſſary to diſcharge his continual care of us; it muſt be equally ſo, to ſupport our Faith and Truſt in him. When men are dead, we expect no ſervice, or ſuccour from them: And therefore were he ſtill in the Grave, we ſhould not fix our Hope and Truſt in, or make our Addreſſes to him.

Queſt. Was it neceſſary, to ſhew him to be the *Meſſiah*, and to prove his Religion?

Anſw. Yes, for he had appealed to it, as *a ſign* of his being a *true Prophet*, Mat. 12. 38, 39, 40. And therefore by the way of tryal which God † preſcribed the *Jews*, *viz.* the *accompliſhment of predictions*, he

† *Deut.* 18. 18, 21, 22.

he had appear'd to be a falſe *Prophet*, had he failed in it. So that *if Chriſt be not riſen*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *your Faith is vain*, 1 Cor. 15. 14.

Queſt. In his Death and Reſurrection, methinks we have a plain and palpable inſtance of the immortality of Humane Souls, and of a future Life beyond the Grave, where God may reward or puniſh us?

Anſw. So we have. For his Soul manifeſtly did exiſt apart from his Body, during the time of their Separation, till on the *third day* it was reunited again. So that mens Souls can ſubſiſt without, as well as in their Bodies, and when they depart hence, go into another place, where they are capable of being called to account for all they have done in this life. On which account, as well as others, St. *Paul* might well ſay, That God hath *given aſſurance of a future Life* and *Judgment, by raiſing Chriſt from the dead*, Acts 17. 31. And St. *Peter*, That *God hath begotten us to the hope of an Eternal Inheritance, thro' the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the Dead*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

Queſt. We read of ſeveral others, that roſe from the Dead, as well as *Chriſt*; had he any thing ſingular in his Reſurrection above them?

Anſw. Yes, he raiſed himſelf by his own power, but they were all raiſed by him; he was not only the *firſt* that roſe, but as the *Firſt-Fruits*, and all the World beſides riſe as the enſuing Crop, which depends upon

upon him. *Destroy this Temple*, saith he, *and in three days I will raise it up*, Joh. 2. 19, 21. *I lay down my life, and take it up again*, Joh. 10. 18. *He is the first-born from the Dead*, Col. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 5. *As in* Adam *all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive: but every man in his own order, Christ the First-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15. 22, 23.

Quest. But did not *Lazarus* rise before *Christ*, John 11. 44. and *Jairus*'s *Daughter*, Luk. 8. 55. and the *Widows Son of* Nain, Luk. 7. 12, 14, 15. and how then is he said to be the *first of the Dead*, that returned?

Answ. They returned to die again; but he was the first that rose to life everlasting. *He being raised, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him*, Rom. 6. 9.

Quest. By his Resurrection, *Christ* got Glory and Happiness to himself, even that *Joy*, for which St. *Paul* says, *he endured the Cross*, Heb. 12. 2. But did he thereby acquire any Power over us?

Answ. Yes, his Death purchased, and his Resurrection invested him with an absolute Power and Dominion over us. *For this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the Dead and Living*, Rom. 14. 9. And after his Resurrection, saith he, *All Power is given to me, both in Heaven, and in Earth*, Mat. 28. 18.

Quest. If so, his Resurrection lays an obligation upon us to obey him?

Answ. Yes; *like as he rose from the dead, so*

ſo muſt we riſe to newneſs of life, Rom. 6. 4.

Queſt How long ſtay'd he upon Earth, after he was riſen again?

Anſw. For the ſpace of *forty days, diſcourſing, and ſpeaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God*, Acts 1. 3.

Queſt. Whither went he when he left it?

Anſw. To Heaven, whither he was taken up in a *bright Cloud*, all the *Apoſtles looking up* after him, *till he was taken up out of their ſight*, Acts 1. 3, 9. And now he is there, he *ſitteth at the right hand of God.*

Queſt. What mean you by his *ſitting at the right hand of God?*

Anſw. His advancement to the heighth of Dignity and Authority, in the preſence of God. The *Right-hand* of a Prince, is the place of peculiar Favour, and of higheſt Honour and Reſpect: as *Solomon*, when he would *do Honour* to his Mother *Bathſheba, ſet her at his Right-hand*, 1 King. 2. 19. To be placed at hand, by the priviledge of nearneſs; gives opportunity for Conference and Addreſs: And to be placed at the Right-hand, the Hand of uſe and buſineſs, is to be in the way, both of preſenting all Offers, and receiving of Returns; whence it is a known mark of ſpecial Favour and Honour, with all Potentates. And ſo by Chriſt's *ſitting at God's Right-Hand*, is expreſſed his Soveraign Honour and Power, in the preſence of God. Or, perhaps, moreover his ſitting in his humane ſhape,

on the Right-hand of that Bright Throne, or Resplendant Glory, which visibly accompanies, and manifests some extraordinary presence of God: as he appeared to *Stephen in his Vision, who saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the Right-hand of God*; that is, I suppose, at the Right-hand of that visible Glory, wherewith God appeared, *Acts* 7. 55. And this, probably, is what the *Scripture* means, by *his sitting at the Right-hand of Power*, Mat. 26. 64. and *on the Right-hand of Majesty*, Heb. 1. 3. That is, on the Right-hand of such † Glory, or bright Appearance, which is the usual Symbol of God's Power and Majesty, which at other times is expressed, by *his sitting on the Right-hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 12. 2. or, *on the Right-hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens*, Heb. 8. 1.

† Exod. 24. 16, 17. Ezek. 1. 27, 28.

Quest. It was most just that he should be exalted thither in recompence of his meritorious sufferings, as the *Apostle* notes, *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. and *Heb.* 12. 2. But is he gone thither, to carry on any Designs for us?

Answ. Yes, and those of the greatest importance. For there, in the highest manner and to the fullest effect, he exercises all his Offices in our behalf.

Quest. I pray you explain the Designs he carries on for us there?

Answ. First, The work of *Intercession, as our Priest*. For he stands before God to mediate on our behalf, and to obtain for us, whatsoever God has promised, or he has

has purchaſed, or we ſtand in need of. *He is enter'd into Heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24.

Queſt. Doth he then plead with God, and move and Petition him, for all the things we gain from him?

Anſw. His Interceſſion is not by Words, and formal Pleas, and Supplications; but by Actions; that is, by preſenting of himſelf, and ſhewing his own Sacrificed Body before God. He intercedes, by ſhewing of himſelf, and therefore St. *Paul* calls his Interceſſion, *his appearance in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24.

Queſt. And is this way as effectual, as by forming Vocal Pleas?

Anſw. Yes undoubtedly. The Blood of his Sacrifice, as St. *Paul* ſays, *ſpeaks*, Heb. 12. 24. It doth not only breathe out Prayers, but prefers Claims and Demands; and thoſe too, not only in virtue of Gods Promiſe, but alſo of his own Merits and dear-bought Purchaſe, which is a way of moving with Power and Prevalence, beyond all expreſſions.

Queſt. Did the *High-Prieſt* among the *Jews*, intercede thus?

Anſw. Yes; when he went in to intercede with God in the *Holy of Holies*, after he had ſlain the Sacrifice, he was not directed to make any ſet Speeches, and vocal Supplications, but only to carry in the *Blood of Expiation*, and preſent it to God, by *ſprinkling it upon, and before the Mercy-*

seat, Lev. 16. 14, 15. which real exhibition of the thing it self, that was to plead for them, was more moving and effectual, than any Verbal Speech, or Vocal Prayer, he could have put up for them.

Quest. And will Christ continue thus to intercede for us; that is, to shew himself, and exhibit his Sacrifice before God in our behalf, always?

Answ. Yes, *he ever lives to make intercession for us*, which renders him *able to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. And therefore *the Heavens must receive him, till the restitution of all things*, Acts 3. 21. It was enough for the *Sacrificing* part of his *Priest-hood*, which made the Purchase to be once done. But the *Interceding* part, which brings down the purchased Blessings to all men, in all times and places, must still be a doing. And therefore he continues in the presence of God, to shew himself, and intercede, to the end of the World; which will be so long, as he will exercise his Mediatory Power, or we shall stand in need of his Intercession.

Quest. What things will he move, and intercede with God for, which therefore we may make sure to speed in?

Answ. For all the Benefits he has purchased, and God has promised, which are all contain'd in the *New-Covenant*. His intercession in virtue of his Blood, is only to apply the Merits and Purchase of it. So that as at first he *shed* it, so now he *shews* his

his Blood, for *Covenant-Mercies*, and on *Covenant-Terms*; but he never moves that any Perſon ſhould obtain them otherwiſe.

Queſt. Then he will never move for wicked and obdurate Sinners, that God would relax the ſeverity of his Laws for their ſakes. Nor, for ſlothful and careleſs ones, that by an over-powering and irreſiſtible Grace, he would do all for them, and work his Will in them, and ſo ſave all their Pains. Since the New Covenant offers no Pardon, but to the Penitent; nor ſaving Grace, but to the Sincere and Induſtrious?

Anſw. Very Right.

Queſt. By this I ſee, we muſt by no means look upon *Chriſt* at *God's Right-Hand*, as a Byaſſed, Partial Advocate, that ſeeks to wring what he can from God, and gain all for our ſide. But as an Equal and Impartial Mediator, who has a juſt Regard to both ſides, and will ſhew himſelf as careful of God's Authority and Honour, by ſecuring him of our Duty, as of our wellfare, by obtaining for us his Mercy?

Anſw. Moſt certainly. *For this cauſe*, ſaith St. Paul, *of purging our Conſciences from dead Works to God's Service*, as well, as *that they who are called, may receive the Promiſe of the Eternal Inheritance, he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament*, Heb. 9. 14, 15. In diſcharging this Truſt, we may be ſure, in the heighth of all his care for us, he will be juſt to God. Nay, being God's own

Son, and both infinitely nearer Related to, and better pleaſed with him, than he is with us, were he any ways capable of being byaſſed, we cannot imagine it ſhould be on ours, but on his ſide. So that in all the Part he acts as our *Interceſſor*, we muſt not imagine, that he will in the leaſt diſhonour God to oblige us, or ever once aim, or attempt to make us ſecure, in any undutifulneſs, and contempt of his, and our Heavenly Father.

Queſt. Surely, being the moſt dearly Beloved Son of God, he muſt needs be an Interceſſor of Great Power?

Anſw. Yes, of Abſolute Power, and infallibly ſure to gain whatſoever he moves for. For, beſides his Relation and Filial nearneſs, he continually Repreſents his own infinite Merits, which can claim any Favours. Nay, for the ſake of thoſe Merits, on this Appearance to plead them before God, he is made a *Royal Prieſt*, and has all Power given unto him as a King, ſo. that he can grant what he pleaſes. *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* Joh. 14. 13, 14.

Queſt. This ſhews how able he is to Succeed, but is he willing, and ready to uſe all his Intereſt, and move for us?

Anſw. No doubt of that. For his Love has made him ſhed for us his own Hearts-Blood, and therefore it can never ſtick at any

any other Service, or procuring for us any Bleſſings from Almighty God. *He is a Merciful, and Faithful High-Prieſt*, both true to our Intereſts, and tender of our Infirmities, having felt them in himſelf, *Heb.* 2. 17. and 4. 15. and therefore is as willing and ready, as he is able to intercede for us.

Queſt. Is it particularly any part of his Interceſſion, to hand and preſent our Prayers?

Anſw. Yes. This was the Buſineſs of the *Jewiſh Prieſts*. One part of their *Prieſthood* was to *burn Incenſe*, which was to perfume the Peoples Prayers, who, as St. *Luke* notes, *prayed without, in the time of Incenſe*, *Luk.* 1. 10. preſenting their Prayers to God in theſe ſweet Smells; whence the *Pſalmiſt* begs his *Prayers may be ſet forth before God as the Incenſe*, Plal. 141. 2. And *the Vials of Odors*, or *Incenſe*, in the *Revelations*, St. *John* ſays, are *the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 5. 8. And this accordingly, *Chriſt* our Interceſſor in Heaven doth for us: for he is *the Angel* in the *Revelations*, who *on the golden Altar before the Throne, offers the Incenſe, with the Prayers of all Saints*, Rev. 8. 3. By him it is we muſt preſent all our Prayers; whence we are ſaid, *thro' him to have acceſs to the Father*, Eph. 2. 18. and *in him to have boldneſs, and acceſs with confidence*, Eph. 3. 12. Nay, ſince the Prayers we put up, have many ſinful Defects adhering to them, they are fit to come to a moſt holy God from the Hand of no other *Mediator*, but him,

who has not only the acceptableneſs of his Perſon to prefer, but the Merit of his Sacrifice too to atone for them.

Queſt. By this it ſhould ſeem, that whenſoever we pray for any thing to Almighty God, we ſhould not ſeek after other Mediators, but apply by him. And ſince he is ſo Powerful in Mediation, this is not only our bounden Duty, but our trueſt Wiſdom?

Anſw. So it is: For, *he is our Advocate with the Father*, 1 John 2. 1. the *one Mediator between God and Man*. 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Whatſoever*, ſays he, *you ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*, John 16. 23. We are ſure he is now in the immediate Preſence of God, to prefer any Suit; but we are not ſure that Departed Saints are there, who, for ought we know, may be kept till the laſt Day in ſome inferior Place of Comfort and Refreſhment; Good Souls, as I ſhall note hereafter, not receiving their Conſummation before the laſt Judgment. When we addreſs by him, we only take that way of Application God himſelf has preſcribed; and in all Juſtice, and Reaſon, we ſhould allow God the Direction how we ſhall ſeek his Favours, ſince he is the moſt Free and Soveraign Diſpoſer of them. Nay, ſince the Prayers we put up are uttered by ſinful Lips, and mingled with our own Frailties and Defects, they can come worthy and pure to God from him alone, whoſe Blood, as I ſaid, has Merit enough to purge, as well as his Perſon Favour enough

enough to prefer them. Tho a perfect Prayer, had not God otherwiſe order'd it, might in it ſelf be preſented, eſpecially from a perfect Man, by any acceptable Mediator; yet a ſinful Prayer, from ſinful Men, doth plainly need ſuch a Mediator, as in the ſame Perſon is both *Interceſſor* and *Redeemer*. Thus the *Altar of Incenſe* among the *Jews*, which *ſtood without the Vail, before the Mercy-ſeat, daily* to perfume and preſent the Peoples Prayers, was *once a year to be ſprinkled with the Blood of Atonement*, plainly intimating, that the Means of preſenting Prayers, muſt be endow'd withal with a Power of expiating them, *Exod.* 30. 6, 7, 8, 10. And accordingly, the *Apoſtle* mentions *Chriſt*'s Mediation, as joyn'd to, and founded on his Redemption. *One Mediator between God and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. And, *If any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, who is* alſo *the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Queſt. What other Deſign doth *Chriſt* carry on for us in Heaven?

Anſw. 2. The Care of *Governing his Church* as a *King*. *He is at the Right-hand of God; Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, being ſubject unto him*, 1 Pet. 3. 22. and *all Authority in Heaven, and Earth, being put into his Hand*, Mat. 28. 18. This Power he purchaſed by his Death; but was put in full Poſſeſſion of it, when he came to claim it by his Interceſſion. *Queſt.*

Queſt. Wherein doth he exerciſe this Plenitude of Power?

Anſw. In Giving Laws to his Church: For *he is the one Law-giver, that is able either to ſave, or to deſtroy*, Jam. 4. 12. And ſince he is the Legiſlator in Religion, 'tis an Uſurpation upon his Prerogative, for any to form to themſelves a new-fangled Worſhip, and beat out other Paths to Heaven of their own deviſing.

In Protecting it from all, both outward and inteſtine Enemies, whether the World, the Fleſh, or Men, or Devils. For *he ſits at God's Right-hand, till his Enemies be made his Foot-ſtooll*, Pſal. 110. 1. and Heb. 10. 12, 13. and *he muſt reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet*, 1 Cor. 15. 25.

And, laſtly, in judging all the World, to their preſent Portion of the Eternal State when they leave the Body, and to the full Conſummation of it at the laſt Day. *For* now, *the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*, Joh. 5. 22. 27. Which, as it makes for the unſpeakable Comfort of all his Faithful Servants, ſince they are to be judg'd by their own *Advocate*, who has preferr'd their Eaſe and Happineſs to his own Life; ſo will it be to the eternal Terrour of all *thoſe his Enemies, who would not have him to reign over them*, Luk. 19. 27. And all this Power he exerciſes himſelf from Heaven, beſides what he doth by his *Biſhops* and *Paſtors*, who are the Officers of his Kingdom, and his

Deputies

Deputies and Subſtitutes here on Earth.

Queſt. Has he any other Buſineſs to do for us at God's Right-hand, as our *King?*

Anſw. Yes, to *prepare a Place for us*, and allot us Royal Habitations with himſelf. *I go to prepare a Place for you, and I will come again, and receive you to my ſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo*, Joh. 14. 2, 3. The *Firſt Adam* loſt *Paradiſe*, and the *Second Adam* was to reſtore us to it: Who, after he had merited it for us by his Croſs, aſcended into Heaven, to inſtal our Nature there, and claim his Purchaſe. And, diſcharging the mighty Angel, whoſe flaming Sword, after the Fall, was ſet to guard the Paſſage to it from our Intruſions, open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.

Queſt. What further Concern did he tranſact for us, by going to Heaven?

Anſw. 3. As a *Prophet*, he ſent down the *Holy Ghoſt*, to inſtruct his Church in his Abſence, and to be with us in his ſtead. *It is expedient for you, that I go away: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you*, Joh. 16. 7. *Being by the Right-hand of God exalted, he received the Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 2. 33. and ſent him on his *Apoſtles, to abide with them for ever*, Joh. 14. 16.

Queſt. How did the *Holy Spirit* ſupply his Abſence?

Anſw. By endowing them with ſuch miraculous

raculous Gifts, as enabled them to propagate his Religion thro the World as effectually, as if he had ſtaid with them; and with ſuch inward Graces, as would fit themſelves for thoſe Manſions he had provided for them. Of both which, I ſhall ſay more in their proper place.

Queſt. And theſe Gifts, you ſay, he aſcended to beſtow upon his Church?

Anſw. Yes; *the Holy-Ghoſt was not to be given, till after Jeſus was glorified*, Joh. 7.39. but *when he aſcended up on high, he received Gifts for Men, that the Lord might dwell among them*, Pſal. 68. 18. and Eph. 4. 8.

Queſt. Now our Saviour *Chriſt* is Aſcended, is not his Glorified Body to take up its Manſion, and fixt Abode at God's Right-hand?

Anſw. Yes; as St. *Peter* told the *Jews*, *the Heavens muſt receive him, unto the Times of Reſtitution of all things*, Act. 3. 21. And then, as the *Angel* told his *Apoſtles*, *he ſhall ſo come again to judge the World from Heaven, in like manner as they then ſaw him go into Heaven*, Act. 1. 11.

Queſt. If his Bodily Preſence and Local Abode be at the *Right-hand of God's Throne in Heaven*, then we are not to expect any thing of a Bodily Preſence in any Ordinances here on Earth?

Anſw. No; as to his *Bodily Preſence*, it is expreſly ſaid, that *he parted from his Diſciples*, Luk. 24. 51. that *he left the World*, Joh. 16. 28. and *is no more in the World*,

* Joh. 17. 11.

Joh. 17. 11. and, tho *the Poor we ſhould, yet him we ſhould not have always with us*, Mat. 26. 11. that *whilſt we are in the Body, we are abſent from him*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. and are not to *be with him, till we depart hence*, Phil. 1. 23. that his Bodily Abode is *in Heaven*, where he is to remain *till the Conſummation*, Act. 3. 21. and without *aſcending to Heaven* to fetch him, there is no *bringing him back* to Earth again, *Rom.* 10. 6. and when he comes to judge the World, it ſhall be from thence by Change of Place and Local Motion, call'd *his Deſcending from Heaven*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 16. and *coming in the Clouds of Heaven*, Mat. 26. 64. and the Saints are *to be call'd* up from the Earth *into the Air to meet him*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 17. All which plainly imply his Bodily Preſence to be circumſcribed, and limited to God's Right-hand, and no longer in this World. But the way of *Chriſt*'s Preſence with his Church, is by his *Spirit*, which works the ſame Effects, and confers the ſame Graces, that he himſelf would, were he perſonally upon Earth. His Spirit is his *Advocate*, who was to ſucceed in his Place, to maintain his Cauſe, *Joh.* 15. 26. and to ſtay with us all the time of his abſence, *he ſhall abide with you for ever*, Joh. 14. 16. And this Preſence of his Spirit, in all compleatneſs of Vertue and real Effects, he himſelf judges preferable to all Ocular Manifeſtations of his Perſon or Senſible Preſence; which, tho it might ſerve more to delight our Eyes, and entertain

tain our Fancies, yet would ſignifie leſs to real and deſirable Purpoſes. *'Tis expedient for you*, ſays he, *that I go away*, ſpeaking to his *Diſciples* of his Bodily Abſence: *For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will ſend him*, Joh. 16. 7. And, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, but the Fleſh profits nothing*, ſaid he at another time to the groſs *Capernaites*, upon a like Competition of theſe *two* ways of his Preſence with us, *Joh.* 6. 63.

Queſt. What muſt we learn from *Chriſt*'s being exalted to ſuch Sovereign and Supereminent Authority, at God's Right-hand?

Anſw. To render him the *Reverence*, and *Obedience*, due to ſo High a Majeſty. For ſince *God has* thus *highly exalted him, at his Name every Knee muſt bow, and every Tongue confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*, Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.

Queſt. What from his being ſo Compaſſionate, and Powerful an Advocate?

Anſw. To come to him in every Want or Diſtreſs, with *Confidence* and *Aſſurance of Faith*; being fully perſwaded, both of his Kindneſs for us, and of his Intereſt with God, to obtain whatſoever is neceſſary, or convenient for us. *Having ſuch an High-Prieſt, let us come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 14, 16. But particularly, to come with ſure Hope and Expectation of the Pardon of our Sins, when we truly repent of them; and of his Good

Good Spirit and Grace, when we are careful to make a Diligent and Right uſe of them. *If any Man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, who is a Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And, *who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that dyed, yea rather that is riſen again, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* Rom. 3. 34.

Queſt. What learn we from his Power to Subdue all his Enemies?

Anſw. To truſt him, as I noted above, with the care of our ſelves, and of his Church, and not ſuffer our ſelves to be caſt into any anxious Fears, or forced upon the uſe of any unlawful means, by any Streights. But to believe, (let Dangers and Diſorders be what they will,) that the *Lord Reigns*, and that we and all his faithful People, are ſafeſt whilſt we are doing our Duty, and are in his hands. That indeed, is the true way to yield preſent ſecurity, but eſpecially, if thereby we happen to ſuffer, to make ſure a ſurpaſſing Recompence of Glory. *For this is a Faithful ſaying, if we be dead with him,* that is to Sin, *we ſhall alſo live with him,* that is in Glory: *If we ſuffer and endure,* that is, perſevere in obeying, chiefly when we obey with Loſs and Difficulty, *we ſhall alſo Reign with him.* 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.

Queſt. Since *Chriſt* is now in Heaven, and we profeſs to fix all our Hopes in him: Should not that make us think much of that Place

Place where he is, and of the way to come thither?

Answ. Without Question it should. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God*, Col. 3. 1. *Here in the Body, we sojourn from the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *In this World we are strangers and Pilgrims*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. But God above is our Father, and *Jesus Christ*, at God's Right-Hand, is our Lord, and the *Glorified Saints are our Fellow-Citizens*, Eph. 2. 19. And being thus *Gods Family or Domesticks*, our *Conversation should be*, where our Civil Relation and Society is, that is *in Heaven, whence also we look for the Lord Jesus*, Phil. 3. 20. Since *our Treasure is* with him *in Heaven, there should our Hearts be also*, Mat. 6. 21. So that although in passing through this World, we cannot quite neglect the things of it, yet must we always heedfully mind, and carefully seek the things above it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Future Judgment.

The Contents.

The necessity of the Future Judgment. All men are judged, and made happy or miserable, at their Deaths. But not so fully then, as they will be afterwards. The Compleat and General

ral Judgment, is at the end of the World. In that, Jeſus Chriſt is to be the Judge. Who are to be judged. In that Judgment no Condemnation, but for breaking Gods Laws: So not for indifferent things. Men ſhall be tryed and ſentenced for all their ſinful Actions, with regard to their laſting Effects. For their moſt ſecret ones. And ſuch ill deeds as were diſguiſed under the faireſt Pretences. For their ſinful Omiſſions. And Neglecting to Employ, and improve their Talents. For ſinful Words. And Thoughts and Deſires. For all theſe Men ſhall be judged impartially, without Reſpect of Perſons. But with Equity and Candor, not in Rigor. The Benign Judge will be very ready to obſerve what makes for us, and make the beſt of our Performances. And interpret the ſeemingly Rigorous Expreſſions of his own Laws, with great condeſcenſion to Humane Meaſures. He will allow for involuntary Failings. And judge Candidly and Favourably of that involuntarineſs. And for Natural Infirmities. And for Providential diſadvantages, as Multiplicity of Buſineſs, greatneſs of Temptations, Bodily Indiſpoſitions. For Pitiable Defects of Degrees in Duties. Great Latitude on the ſide of Bliſs, and all not required to be of the ſame Size. He will Reward Good Things, tho' done with Difficulty and Reluctance, yea when Pitiably ſtain'd with impure mixtures. Our Judge will ſhew all this Candor, and would have us expect it. In Recompencing good

Men, he will consider the Difficulties and Oppositions. And the hazard, and cost of their Services. And the hardships of Providence, allotted to exercise good Men in this Life. Of the Condemnation of ill Men. The Fire, which is to torment them, shall burn up and dissolve the World. Practical Inferences from the last judgment.

Quest. THE *Seventh* Article is, That, from Gods Right-Hand, *Jesus Christ shall come to judge both the quick and the dead.* Is there any Necessity of a *Future Judgment?*

Answ. Yes, upon many Accounts. As,

1*st.* For an exact Discrimination, to distinguish Persons. Numbers of ill Men are Hypocrites, or Good only in outward appearance; and these pass here for Saints. But at the last Day, God will make them manifest, and put them into *Separate* Companies, *Dividing*, as *Christ* foretold, *the Sheep from the Goats*, Mal. 25. 32.

2. For the clearing of Gods Justice, which seems in this World oftentimes, to misplace Rewards and Punishments, afflicting the Righteous, and making Sinners Prosperous: and therfore will surly be manifested in allotting more suitable Retributions, visibly Rewarding the good, and Punishing the wicked afterwards. Thus St. *Paul* told the *Thessalonians*, that their Present Sufferings, who were Gods good Servants, was a Token and Pledge of Gods Future

Future Rewards on them, and of his Puniſhments upon their Perſecutors. *The Perſecutions, and Tribulations you endure, are a manifeſt Token of the Righteous Judgment of God*, i. e. a token and ingagement, that God will hereafter manifeſt his Righteous Judgment, in their Puniſhment, and your Reward: *Seeing it is a Righteous Thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, Reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theſ. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. And *that Day*, St. *Paul* calls *the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, when*, however here they might ſeem connived at, *God will render to every Man according to his Deeds*, Rom. 2. 5, 6.

3. For Reverſing the Error of all Humane Judgments. All Humane Courts are under God, who is the Supreme Diſpenſer of Juſtice, and Protector of injured Innocence. And therefore if Humane Courts, who are his Subſtitutes, through Corruption, or Miſtake, Condemn the Innocent; it may beſeem him, whoſe Care comprehends, and whoſe Juſtice will do Right to all, to Reverſe the Error, and clear them again to all the World.

4. For the ſupport of Religion, which has no ſufficient encouragement, without Hope of future Rewards. *He that comes to God* in Religion, *muſt believe he is a Rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6. *Moſes*, and the *Patriarchs*, ſerved God,

out of *a Reſpect to the Recompence of a Reward.* v. 26. And this Reward was not preſent here, but Future in another World. *They dyed, not having received the Promiſes, but only having ſeen them afar off*, confeſſing *themſelves* here to be *Strangers and Pilgrims, and to ſeek a Country* in a better place. v. 13, 14, 16. So that they were Religious, from an eye to future Judgment and Retributions.

Queſt. From theſe Reaſons, it may ſeem fit and neceſſary, God ſhould have a Future Judgment; but are we ſure he will have it?

Anſw. Yes; *he hath given aſſurance unto all men, that he will judge the World by Jeſus Chriſt, by raiſing him from the Dead.* Act. 17. 31.

Queſt. How doth this aſſure it?

Anſw. Both as an Inſtance of it, ſince thereby he moſt juſtly rewarded our Saviour *Chriſt*, who had done and ſuffered ſo much for him in this World. And alſo as it was Gods owning, and irrefragable Teſtimony to his Doctrine, which declares the Future Judgment as a Principal Part of it.

Queſt. When is this Judgment to be?

Anſw. At the end of the World, when there ſhall be no more Days of Labour and Tryal, but all of Recompence, in Puniſhment or Reward.

Queſt. If it be ſo far off, men will be the leſs afraid of it, they being very apt to overlook Dangers that lye remote; as indeed

indeed, when any things are far diſtant, to look upon Great ones as little, and little ones as none at all. And will none be judged, till the end of the World?

Anſw. Yes: That is only for the General Judgment of all men. But every particular Man is ſentenced at his Death, either to a State of Bliſs, or Miſery.

Queſt. But if a man be condemned in the *Firſt* Judgment, ſince there is ſo great a Diſtance betwixt it and the *Second*, may he not have time to make his Peace, and either by doing or ſuffering ſomething himſelf, or by the Care and Kindneſs of his Friends, offering Sacrifices, Prayers or Alms for him, get the Sentence reverſed, and his State alter'd, and come off clear at the laſt Judgment?

Anſw. No: Betwixt the Place of Rewards and Puniſhments, in the other World, there is an *unpaſſable Gulph fixed, ſo that they who would paſs from you to us, cannot*; as *Abraham*, told the *Rich Man in Torment* *. There is neither Repentance nor Reconciliation in the Grave. *When* once *the Night is come*, ſays our Saviour, *no Man can Work*, Joh. 9. 4. *Now, in this Life*, ſaith St. *Paul, is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And at the laſt Day, Men ſhall all be tryed, not *for what they have done*, or ſuffered ſince they were ſeparate Spirits, but for what they did when they were Cloathed with their Bodies; *giving account for every*

* *Luk.* 16. 26.

thing done in the Body, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And thoſe deeds, are not what others have done for us, but what, through the Grace of God, and the Benifit of their Prayers, we have been enabled to do for our ſelves. *Every Man ſhall receive for things done in his Body, according to what he hath done*, ſaith St. *Paul*. And *every Mans cauſe of rejoycing, muſt be in himſelf alone, and not in another*, by paſſing over his Neighbours Prayers, or Merits to him. *For every man ſhall bear his own Burden*, Gal. 6. 4, 5. As a juſt God will not *puniſh* one for anothers Sin; ſo neither will he accept one for anothers Well-doing, *Ezek.* 18. 20.

Queſt. If Sentence is ſo quickly paſſed upon them, the Souls of good men are not in a deep ſleep, and inſenſible State, but enter upon Happineſs, as the Souls of ill men do upon miſery, as ſoon as they leave this world?

Anſw. Yes, they do ſo. For *this day*, ſays our Saviour to the *Penitent Thief*, *thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe*, *i. e.* in a place of Happineſs, *Luk.* 23. 43. And *for me to dye is gain*, ſaith S. *Paul*, whereas an inſenſible State would have brought him no Advantage, *Phil.* 1. 21. And *when we are abſent from the Body, we are preſent with the Lord*, which preſence notes happy enjoyment, 2 *Cor.* 5. 68. And *Lazarus, when he dyed, was carried into Abraham's boſom, and Dives lift up his eyes in Hell, being in Torment*, Luk. 16. 22, 23. All which ſhew, the Deceaſed Righ-

teous

teous to be Happy, (as the Wicked Wretched,) not only in expectation, but preſent enjoyment.

Queſt. You ſpeak this of all the Righteous?

Anſw. Yes, for the Scripture makes no Difference. *This Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, ſaid *Chriſt* to the *Penitent Thief*, tho' he had been a very great Sinner, and was but a very young Convert. And the uſual way of expreſſing the Death of good Men, is by their † *falling aſleep*, which notes Eaſe and Refreſhment. And in general it is ſaid of theſe *that dye in the Lord*, that *from henceforth they are bleſſed, and reſt from their Labours*, Rev. 14. 13. So that this *Preſent Life*, as our Lord notes in the * Story of *Lazarus*, is the Time of *their receiving evil things:* And they are no longer exerciſed with Torments, but, what is inconſiſtant with them, enter upon eaſe and comfort, in degree more or leſs, according to the difference of their virtuous Attainments, immediately upon their Deaths.

† 1 *Cor.* 15. 6, 8, 20, 51. & 1 *Theſ.* 3. 13, 14, 15.

* *Luk.* 16. 25.

Queſt. But is the Happineſs of the one, or the Miſery of the other, ſo full then, as it ſhall be after the laſt Judgment?

Anſw. No; for now their Souls only are Happy, but then their Bodies ſhall be raiſed too, and the Bliſs of the whole man, both Soul and Body, ſhall be compleat. And then they ſhall be happy in a fuller degree, and have a more perfect meaſure

of it. This increaſe of Happineſs they ſhall receive at the laſt Judgment; and therefore it is † called the Time of their being *crown'd*, or rewarded, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. and they are repreſented as deſiring it. So *the Souls under the Altar, ſlain for the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, do in the *Revelations*, asking *how long* God would delay *to judge the World*, for the Conſummation of *their Reward*, and of their *Perſecutors Puniſhment*, Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11. And ſo it is with the damned Spirits too, the heavieſt part of their Doom being ſtill to come, and their preſent Miſeries, tho' very great, being but Foretaſtes and Beginnings of what they are to be conſign'd to at the laſt Day. Thus the *Devils* are ſaid *to be reſerved in Chains, againſt the Judgment of the Great Day*; their preſent State, it ſeems, in compariſon of it, being no more than the Miſery of a Priſon, compared to that of the Day of Execution, 2 Pet. 2. 4. and Jude 6. And *the Devils ask Chriſt, if he were come to torment them before the time*; plainly intimating, that the Fulneſs of their Torment was not to be, till the Great Day comes, *Mat.* 8. 29.

† Luk. 14. 14. 2 Theſſ. 1. 6, 7.

Queſt. Theſe Private Judgments then are much ſhort of the Laſt Judgment, becauſe then is the Conſummation of Reward and Puniſhment?

Anſw. Yes. And alſo, becauſe that Judgment ſhall be Solemn and Publick, in full Audience and open Court, *before Angels* and *all the World*, Luk. 12. 8, 9. and General, whereat

whereat all, both Angels and Men, ſhall be Convened and Tried.

Queſt. And muſt not this be, till the End of the World?

Anſw. No; for it is *Chriſt*'s laſt Act in Diſcharging his *Mediatory* Office, and therefore muſt not be concluded, till all Things are at an End. All the Time before the Judgment, is a State of Trial, for proving Perſons; wherein *Chriſt* gives Laws to direct us, and ſufficient Opportunities, and inward Grace, to help us to perform them. But all the Time after it, is a State of irreverſible Recompences, in ſharing and diſpenſing promiſed Rewards, and Penal Executions. After the laſt Sentence is once paſs'd, there is no more place for Interceſſions, and making Friends; but a New and Unalterable State, of Eternal Joys or Miſeries, commences. And thus *Chriſt*, having conſummated his Truſt as *Mediator*, will ſurrender up his Power, and *deliver the Kingdom to God the Father*, 1 Cor. 15. 24.

Queſt. The General Judgment, you ſay, is at the End of the World: Has God decreed a ſet Time, and fixed a Day for it?

Anſw. Yes; *he hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, Act. 17. 31. Which Day is called *the Coming of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15. 23. and *the Day of the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 2. & 2 Theſſ. 2. 2.

Queſt. If every Mans Caſe muſt then be fully ſcann'd, and all Actions inquired into,

to, and Pleas heard; methinks, that ſhould be more than one Days Work?

Anſw. So I ſuppoſe it will, the continuance perhaps of a thouſand Days, nay, it may be, of a great number of Years. For *Day*, in Scripture, is any Continuance of Time, which is allotted for any Buſineſs. As the Time of *Iſraels forty Years* Travel *in the Wilderneſs*, is call'd *the Day of Temptation*, Heb. 3. 8, 9. and the Time of *God's ſcourging* and correcting, the *Day of Viſitation*, Iſa. 10. 3. & 1 Pet. 2. 12. and the *Time of the Goſpel*, is *the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And ſo the *Day of Judgment*, is not the Space of twenty four Hours, but all that Time which *Chriſt* ſhall ſpend upon it.

Queſt. It ſeems, God has fixed the Day within himſelf; but is that determinate Day known to any beſides himſelf?

Anſw. No: For *of that determinate Day knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven, nor the Son* himſelf as Man, *but the Father only*, Mat. 24. 36. Mar. 13. 32. It ſhall ſurpriſe the World, and its coming ſhall be *ſudden* and unexpected, *as a Thief in the Night*, or *Travel upon a Woman with Child*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 2, 3.

Queſt. Who ſhall be the Judge at that Great Day, by whom all Men ſhall be tried, and ſentenced?

Anſw. Jeſus Chriſt. For *God will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordain'd; and he hath aſſured them of*

it, by raiſing him from the dead, Acts 17. 31. He only is able to diſcharge this tranſcendent Truſt, having an Authority Paramount, which none can queſtion, or appeal from; an Infinite Underſtanding, that can ſearch the Hearts, and diſcover the naked Truth of every Mans Caſe, and the juſt Validity of their Pleas; an incorruptible Integrity, that cannot in the leaſt be byaſſed by any Flatteries, Offers, Interceſſions, or Intreaties; and an Almighty Power, that can reward the greateſt Services, and puniſh the moſt high and haughty, as well as the meaneſt Criminals. And as he alone is qualified to Diſcharge, ſo he is alſo to ſuſtain the Honour of it. For who is fit to ſit as Judge of Princes and Potentates, Men and Angels; but he, who made and governs them, who is over all in Power, and next in Dignity to the Father, even the Son of God himſelf. *All Judgment is committed to the Son, that all ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,* Joh. 5. 22, 23.

Queſt. Who, at that Day, are to be judged?

Anſw. All Men, that ſhall either be found alive at his coming, or were dead before. For *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive for the things done in the Body,* 2 Cor. 5. 10. yea, and the loſt Angels too; for *know you not that we ſhall judge Angels?* i. e. ſit with *Chriſt,* and approve of his Sentence, when he condemns them? 1 *Cor.* 6. 3. *Queſt.*

Queſt. What Proof will there be of Crimes, and who ſhall be the Witneſſes?

Anſw. The *Devils* are *the Accuſers of the Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. and they will call for Juſtice: But there needs no Teſtimony at that Day, from *the Father of Lies*; for God, in his Omniſcience, keeps a Regiſter and Record of all Mens Actions, and *that Book ſhall be opened*, and *the Dead ſhall be judged* by that unerring *Book* of his Remembrance, *Rev.* 20. 12. Nay, indeed, there is no need of any Witneſſes at all, becauſe the Guilty ſhall confeſs their Crimes, and bear witneſs againſt themſelves: *Their Conſciences ſhall bear witneſs, and their own Thoughts accuſe, or excuſe one another, in the Day when God ſhall judge the Secrets of Men, by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 15, 16.

Queſt. Shall all this be acted in great Solemnity, with Pomp and Splendour?

Anſw. Yes, as much as may be. For *Chriſt* will tranſlate his Royal Court from Heaven to Earth, and come at the Right-hand of that Glory, by which he now ſits in peerleſs Splendor and Majeſty, having all the Holy Angels glittering in their utmoſt Brightneſs, to attend this Triumph. *He ſhall come in his own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of all the Holy Angels*, Luk. 9. 26. & Mat. 25. 31. *He ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 16. And when that ſounds, *all that are in the*

* *Graves*

Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth, Joh. 5. 28, 29. and *there ſhall be a Reſurrection both of the Juſt and Unjuſt*, Acts 24. 15. All theſe *ſhall ſtand before his Throne:* And, after an exact Scrutiny, and fair Trial of all Perſons, *he will ſeparate them one from another*, into two Companies, *as a Shepherd divides the Sheep from the Goats*; and as the *Jews* were wont to do in their *Courts*, ſetting ſuch as were to be *Abſolv'd*, together upon *the Right*; and ſuch as were to be *Condemn'd*, upon *the Left-hand* of their *Tribunals*: And then, with great Solemnity, paſs Sentence; bidding the *Righteous*, *Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*: But ſaying to the *Wicked*, *Depart from me, ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire*, Mat. 25. 31, 32, 34, 41.

Queſt. Where ſhall this Glorious Appearance be?

Anſw. In the Air, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 17. *In the Clouds of Heaven*, ſays our *Saviour*, Mat. 26. 64. Somewhere it will be near the Earth; but in what particular Part, it little concerns us to inquire, or advantages us to underſtand.

Queſt. When this Great Judge has paſſed Sentence, ſhall all Parties concern'd acquieſce in it?

Anſw. Yes; he is the laſt Judge, from whom there can be no Appeal. And there will be no need of any: For all ſhall acknowledge the Perfect and irreprehenſible Juſtice of what he determines. The Righteous,

teous, being tried firſt, and call'd up to ſurround him in Glorious Circles whilſt he tries the reſt, ſhall approve and praiſe his Juſtice. *The Saints ſhall judge the World, i. e.* as his Aſſeſſors, and the Comprobators of his Judgment, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2, 3. And the Mouth of all Wicked, who ſuffer under it, ſhall be ſtopped, and they ſhall be convinced of it within themſelves. For *he will then convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him*, Jude 15.

Queſt. For what ſhall we be judged, and condemned in this Judgment?

Anſw. For all *Tranſgreſſions of the Laws of his Goſpel*, and for thoſe only. He will not judge Arbitrarily, or condemn any for unforbidden Things, or for no Cauſe but only becauſe he pleaſes: But the *Laws of his Goſpel* are the Rule he will try, and judge all Chriſtians by. *God ſhall judge Men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 16. and *the Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge Men at the laſt Day*, Joh. 12. 48.

Queſt. If we ſhall be condemn'd only by God's Laws, then to be ſure unforbidden Things, which are not threatned in the Word of God, and which there is no Law againſt, will never condemn any?

Anſw. Moſt certainly they will not; and there is no Sin in them to be condemned. For *where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion*,

greſſion, Rom. 4. 15. And *whoſoever commits Sin, tranſgreſſes alſo the Law; for Sin is the Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. And *Sin is not imputed, when there is no Law*, Rom. 5. 13. So that it is a vain Fear, either in Religion, or in Common Life, when Mens Conſciences ſcruple Things, which they confeſs to be Indifferent, *i. e.* forbid by no Laws; as uſing a Form of Prayers, Kneeling, Standing, or other Rites and Ceremonies no where forbidden in the Worſhip of God. In the laſt Judgment, they ſhall anſwer only for the Breach of Laws, and therefore are ſure not to endanger their Souls, or become accountable for ſuch as theſe, ſince there is no Law againſt them.

as if x^t in the Goſpel had not forbid uſurping his Authority or adding to his Laws, or complying w^h Mans Uſurpations.

Queſt. You ſay Men ſhall be judged for all their Tranſgreſſions of Gods Laws; then, to be ſure, for all their *Sinful Actions?*

Anſw. Yes: For *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive according to that he hath done in the Body, whether it be good, or bad*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And *the Dead are judged every Man according to their Works*, Rev. 20. 13.

Queſt. So that then we muſt anſwer for all the Actions of our Lives, and receive Reward if they have been good, or Puniſhment if they have been ill ones?

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. The Actions of Men are quickly done, and when they are over, they are wont to think there is an end of them: But do not the good or ill Effects of ſeveral

ſurvive,

ſurvive, and laſt long, and make for a great while after, as if the Action were ſtill a doing?

Anſw. Yes, they do, both in good and bad Actions. So that Men may be ſinning, and ſerving God, not only whilſt they live, but when they are in their Graves.

Queſt. I pray you inſtance to me, how it is ſo in good Actions?

Anſw. If a Man gains Proſelytes to God, this good Fruit will laſt, and they will ſerve him when he is dead. If he promotes Pious Truths, or gives good Advice, or ſhews an holy Example in this World; the Truths may be remembred, and the Advice followed, and the Example copied out and imitated, when he is gone out of it. If he endows Churches, or builds Hoſpitals, or the like; his Piety will be Active when he is at Reſt, and he may be doing Good to the Worlds End. Of theſe, and all ſuch Good Works of permanent Effects, it may be ſaid, as St. *Paul* did of *Abel*'s *Faith*, whereto God gave witneſs, that *by it, he being dead, yet ſpeaketh*, Heb. 11. 4.

Queſt. And is it thus alſo in bad Actions?

Anſw. Yes. For thus the wicked Opinions a Man broaches, may infect after-Ages; or, his corrupt Example, or Advice, live in his Poſterity and Acquaintance. Or, if he corrupt and ſeduce others into any Sins, they may perſiſt in them, after he is reclaimed from them. But then he will

ſin

ſin moſt of all in his Grave, if he has introduced wicked and irreligious Laws and Cuſtoms, which are hardly altered, even where there is the plaineſt, and greateſt Reaſon for it; or abuſed the Laws, to poſſeſs himſelf of other Mens Rights, which derives down the Crime and Curſe of Detaining ill-gotten Goods, on all his Poſterity; or writ Peſtilential Books; or eſtabliſh'd any ungodly or injurious Thing, the Miſchief whereof no one knows when it may determine.

Queſt. And when God comes to judge us, will he take notice, and have reſpect to theſe continued and multiplied Effects of our Actions?

Anſw. 'Tis juſt he ſhould, they being all imputable to us, and reaſonable to believe he will. For *Jeroboam* is taxed for ſinning long after he was dead, becauſe other Mens Sins were owing to him, he having eſtabliſh'd Iniquity by a Law, and formed an Idolatrous Schiſm, and † *made Iſrael to ſin*, † 1 Kings 2 Kings 10. 29. And to this, I ſuppoſe, we may, in part at leaſt, aſcribe the *Trouble* and *Concern of Ghoſts*, and their ſometimes appearing to make Satisfaction, after any great Injuries have been done, and not repaired in their Life-time: Which may ſhew, not only God's Care, in doing Juſtice; but their own, in leſſening their Account too. On which Inducement, I believe, *Dives* was ſollicitous to have his *Brethren* advertiſed of the *Place of Torment*,

15. 29, 30, 34.

by one ſent from the other World, Luke 16. 27, 28. For he being the *Head of his Family*, and a vicious Man, might have done much in corrupting his Kindred and Acquaintance, that reſorted to him. And they being made the worſe by his Example and Influence; the Growth of their Guilt, and Fructification of the ill Seed he had ſown, would accumulate and increaſe his Sufferings. Which Principle of *Self-Love*, I take to be a better Reaſon of that Care of his, than any Charity for others, for which we have cauſe to think there is no Room in that Place. For *God is Love, and he that dwells in Love, dwells in God*; which certainly they do not, who are excluded from his Preſence into that State of Torment, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. And this ſhould make all Men careful how they broach any ill Opinions, or give others any evil Example or Advice: But eſpecially, how they introduce, or revive, or any ways ſupport Irreligious Cuſtoms, or enrich themſelves and Families by Injuſtice, or eſtabliſh any Wickedneſs, leſt thereby they ſin in their Graves, and have Power to offend God, when they have no Power to ſerve him; and continue daily adding Sin to Sin, when they can no longer repent of them. And, on the other hand, it ſhould as much encourage them in any good and uſeful Deeds; whoſe Effects, when they ſpread beyond their Expectations, or laſt beyond their Times, they may reaſonably hope that God, who is more ready to reward

reward than puniſh, will impute to them.

Queſt. I ſee at the laſt Day Men ſhall be judged for the Actions of their Lives: But ſhall they be judged not only for their more Open and Publick, but alſo for their moſt Secret Deeds, that were committed under Concealment, and in the Dark?

Anſw. Yes; *for God ſhall bring every Work into Judgment, with every Secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil,* Eccl. 12. 14. And therefore all Men are infinitely concern'd, not to commit any Wickedneſs under the fancied Security of Privacy, or act ſhamefully even in the Dark; ſince all thoſe Secret Works ſhall then be expoſed to Publick View, and they ſhall be put to ſhame, and condemned for them, before Angels and Men, all looking on.

Queſt. This is moſt terrible to all impenitent Sinners, who will then be puniſh'd for theſe Sins. But is it not diſcouraging to the Righteous too, who have repented of them, and are forgiven? For their Secret Sins, which coſt them ſo much Sorrow here, will then renew their Grief, and put them to an open Shame, if there muſt be ſuch Publick Mention and Expoſal of them?

Anſw. No; they are in no danger of any more trouble from them: For when they are brought to light, as *Solomon* ſays, *God will bring every Work into Judgment, whether it be good or bad,* Eccl. 12. 14. that ſhall be only to ſet off the Impartiality of this

Scrutiny, and the Riches of Gods pardoning Mercy; but they ſhall not be upbraided with them, or leſſen'd in the eſteem, either of Glorified Angels, or of Men. For as God himſelf doth, ſo do they eſteem of Penitents, as if they had always lived innocent; and when once they have left them, forget all their former Offences, as if they had never been done. So that as to all real Effects, of their ſuffering from them, either in their own Perſons, or in the Eſtimation of others, the Sins of the Righteous at that Day, are as if they were not mention'd, but conceal'd. And this will make out thoſe Expreſſions of the *Scriptures*, which ſpeak of *the* † *Lord's not imputing Sin to them*; and, *of their Sins being cover'd*; and of * *God's remembring their Sins and Iniquities no more.* They will not be mention'd ſo as to make them either afraid, or aſhamed; which is as good as if they were wholly hid, and never mention'd at all.

† Rom. 4. 7, 8.

* Heb. 8. 12.

Queſt. Among the Deeds of Men, all thoſe are not really Good, which are ſo in outward Appearance, and which the World takes for ſuch?

Anſw. No: Several good Actions, Hypocritical Men put on only in Diſguiſe: As the *Phariſee* ſeemed to be devout in *making long Prayers*, when that was not to ſerve God, but to get Truſt among Men, that he might be able *to devour Widows Houſes* without ſuſpicion, *Mat.* 23. 14. And when

when the *Precious Ointment was poured on Chriſt's Head*, *Judas* pretended great *Care of the Poor*, and *cried out of the Waſte* on that pretence; when, in truth, that which made him ſpeak, was not his Charity, but his Covetouſneſs, *John* 12. 5, 6. *Abſalom* pretends the *Payment of a Vow in Hebron*; but the Deſign was to execute a fore-laid *Rebellion*, 2 Sam. 15. 7, 10. Many Men pretend Kindneſs, only for Self-ends; Religion, for Secular Intereſts; the Publick Good, when they only ſeek to ſatisfie their own By-ends, or private Reſentments.

Queſt. But when under this Hypocritical Mask, Men commit ill Deeds under fair Colours, will *Chriſt* at that Day bring this Hypocriſie to Light, and condemn theſe Actions, which the Authors juſtified to the World by theſe Pretences?

Anſw. Yes: For *when the Lord cometh, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts*, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *He ſhall be of quick Underſtanding, in the Fear of the Lord, and ſhall not judge after the ſight of his Eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his Ears*; *i. e.* barely from outward Appearances; *but with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity* even *the Meek upon Earth*, where they are Treſpaſſers, *Iſa.* 11. 3, 4. And therefore it nearly concerns us to be ſincere in all the Goodneſs we make ſhew of, and to be the ſame to God, as we appear to be to Men: For if we diſſemble in

any thing, he will pluck off the Diſguiſe, and ſhew us openly to be Hypocritical Pretenders, and diſguiſed Sinners to all the World.

Queſt. I ſee we ſhall be judged then for all our ſinful Actions. But ſhall we judged too, for all our *ſinful Omiſſions*?

Anſw. Yes; for we are as much bound to do what God injoyns, as to forbear doing what he forbids: and at that Day, he will call us to an account for both. *Go ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire*, for in my poor Members, *I felt Hunger, and ye gave me no Meat*; *I was Thirſty, and ye gave me no Drink*; *a Stranger and ye took me not in*; *Naked, and ye Cloathed me not*; *Sick, and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not.* All which are omiſſions of Duty, and for them they are Sentenced. *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43.

Queſt. I perceive we ſhall be ſentenced for neglecting to fulfill Laws. But will Judgment alſo paſs upon us, for neglecting to employ, or improve our Talents?

Anſw. Yes; for the Lord orders the *unprofitable Servant*, who had *hoarded* up his *Talent*, and made no gain with it, *to be caſt into utter Darkneſs*, Mat. 25, 25, 30. And therefore it concerns all men, to whom God has given Leiſure, or Power, or Wealth, or Credit, or Wit and Parts, to look upon all theſe as Truſts; and not to ſquander them away on Vice, or Vanities, Sports and Paſtimes; but, as Wiſe and Faithful *Stewards*, to employ them all for God's ſervice,

ſervice, remembring that all theſe were committed to them for their Maſter's uſe; and that at the laſt Day, they ſhall be called to give an account how they have ſpent them.

Queſt. What ſay you to our *words*, ſhall we be judged at the laſt Day for them too?

Anſw. Yes; for *by thy words thou ſhalt be Juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be Condemned*, Mat. 12. 37. And this ſhould make all men careful, to Govern their Tongues, ſince they muſt give ſo ſtrict an account for the abuſe of them.

Queſt. Chriſt there ſays, *Men ſhall give account in the Day of Judgment, for every idle word*, v. 26. what then will become of moſt men in this world? For is not any man, that Diſcourſes with freedom, liable to utter ſomething that is Idle, that is, works no good, or makes none the better for it?

Anſw. By *Idle word* there, is to be underſtood every *Falſe* and *Slanderous* word, ſuch as the *Jews* had then caſt out againſt him, when they ſaid *he wrought Miracles through Beelzebub*, v. 24.

Queſt. But in this ſtrict Judgment, for all our ſinful Actions, and ſinful Words, will there be any account ſtill further required, for our *inward Thoughts* and *Deſires* of ill, which were never come to act?

Anſw. Yes; for at that Day, *God will*

Judge the Secrets of men, Rom. 2. 16. And *when the Lord comes* to Judgment, *he will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Heart*, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Queſt. But is not every man troubled, more or leſs, with ill Thoughts, and unlawful Deſires, and like to be ſo, whilſt we bear theſe Bodies about us?

Anſw. Yes; for in the *Regenerate* themſelves, *the Fleſh Luſteth againſt the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 17.

Queſt. How then can any man ſtand in the Judgment, if for theſe they ſhall be Condemned?

Anſw. If the bare ſudden Thoughts and Deſires were Damnable, they could not. But that, for which God will then Condemn men, is not all ſtirring of them, but only all *yielding to fulfill them. Make no Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfill the Luſts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. And this the Righteous do not commit, or, when they do, before their Death they Repent of it, and amend it.

Queſt. What will be judged *yielding to fulfill them*?

Anſw. 1. All *inward Conſent* to the fulfilling of them in our hearts, tho, it may be, we cannot do it for want of opportunity. For, *when Luſt has thus Conceived, it bringeth forth Sin*, Jam. 1. 15. And, our Saviour ſays, *Adultery may be committed in the Heart*, Mat. 5. 28.

2. All *Contrivance* for the acting and Fulfilling

Fulfilling of them, after we have conſented to them. *He that Deviſeth to do evil, ſhall be called,* and dealt with as *a miſchievous Perſon,* Prov. 24. 8. And *evil Thoughts,* that is, Murderous Machinations and Contrivances, are ranked in Guilt and Puniſhment with *Murders* themſelves, *Mat.* 15. 19.

3. All *Actual* accompliſhment of them, in Deed and Practice; which is, *fulfilling the Luſts of the Fleſh,* Gal. 5. 16. And this is more provoking ſtill, if it be in a ſettled Cuſtom, and conſtant Tenor of action, which is *walking or living after the Fleſh,* Rom. 8. 1. 4. 13.

Queſt. I perceive then, when *Chriſt* comes to Judgment, we ſhall all be called to Account, for all the ſinful Deeds we have done, and all the ſinful Words we have ſpoken, and all the evil Thoughts or Deſires we have conſented, or endeavoured to fulfill; and Condemned for them, unleſs we have ſincerely repented of them.

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. But how will *Chriſt* proceed in Judging us for theſe Things? Will he paſs Sentence impartially, without reſpect of Perſons?

Anſw. Yes. All that are equal in Guilt, ſhall be ſure to have equal Puniſhment. For the Judge is not capable of being Byaſſed, by Fear or Favour, by any Fondneſs or Indulgence towards any Criminals, by any of their Flatteries or Complements, Gifts or Services, their Crafty inſinuations,

ſinuations, or tireſom importunities, by their Kindred or Families, Sects and Opinions. But abſolutely ſetting aſide all by-Reſpects, he will regard only the Merit of Cauſes, and what doth really influence the Caſe, and Sentence every Man according to the Evidence that lyes againſt him. At that *Revelation of his Righteous Judgment, there is no Reſpect of Perſons with God. They that have ſinned without Law, ſhall Periſh without Law; and as many as have ſinned under the Law, ſhall be Judged by the Law. God will render to every man, according to his Deeds; Eternal Life, to thoſe that have continued in well-doing; but Wrath, and Anguiſh, on every Soul that doth evil, whether* Jew, *or* Gentile, Rom. 2. 5. *to* 13. *God without reſpect of Perſons, judges as every Mans work ſhall be,* 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Queſt. But in judging upon all theſe Points, will *Chriſt* do it in Rigor, preſſing all the Punctilio's, and taking all the Advantages of Law: or will he do it with *Equity* and *Candor*, as one plainly inclined to ſhew all reaſonable favour?

Anſw. He will be the moſt *Fair*, *Equitable*, and *Candid* Judge, our Hearts can wiſh for. He is our *Judge* who is our *Advocate*, and has all along eſpouſed our Cauſe: our *Friend*, that Loved us better than his Life, and ſhed his Blood for us. So that when we are brought before him, we may promiſe our ſelves all the Favour that is conſiſtent with Juſtice.

Queſt.

Queſt. Will he favourably interpret our Performances when they come before him, and make the beſt of every thing, that it can juſtly bear, and be as ready to note what may make for us, as what may make againſt us?

Anſw. Yes; for in the Deſcription of the laſt Judgment, *Mat.* 25. he aſſigns good deeds to *thoſe on his Right-hand*, viz. the *Feeding*, and *Cloathing*, and *Viſiting* him, which in ſtrict Truth they had not done, having never ſeen him, but only by a favourable interpretation, from their having done ſo to his Brethren for his ſake, which ſhews, had they ſeen him in that want, they would much more have done it to himſelf. *Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father, for I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; thirſty, and ye gave me Drink*, &c. And when *they ſhall anſwer, Lord, when ſaw we thee*, to do any of theſe things for thee? He tells us he will reply, *in as much as ye have done it to the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*, v. 34. to 41. Nay, to aſſure us further of his extraordinary Favour, in Cenſuring of his Friends; behold his marvellous Candor, in judging of the worſt Actions of his Enemies; and that too at a Time, when, if ever, he ſhould have been prone to paſs a hard Conſtruction. For, repreſenting the moſt Barbarous Murder of himſelf to God, as he hung upon the Croſs, and had a moſt pungent ſenſe of it, he imputes it to the moſt Pardonable

donable Principles, and ſays, *they acted ſo through Ignorance*, (the only poſſible thing that could be ſuggeſted for their excuſe,) cenſuring that horrid Act, which he of all Men had cauſe to make the worſt of, not as an Accuſer, but rather like a retain'd Advocate, *Luk.* 23. 34. Thus, *in that Day*, will the moſt benign Judge be of Counſel for all the Priſoners, and ſpye all their Virtues, and make the beſt he reaſonably can of every bad Caſe. And, as for good Men, he will impute their Failures to the moſt pardonable Cauſes, and Remember their good Services when they have forgot them, ſetting them off by a kind interpretation, and thinking better of them, than their own Humility and Modeſty would allow themſelves to do.

Queſt. But what ſay you, to the ſeeming Rigor of his own Laws, which require us to † *Love and ſerve him, with all our Heart and ſtrength*? And if this be drawn out to a full ſtretch, and ſtrained to mean our utmoſt Poſſibilities, no Candor to our Performances, can conſtrue them to come up to this pitch.

† *Deut.* 6. 5. *Mat.* 22. 37.

Anſw. The ſeeming Rigor of that Expreſſion, he will interpret with great condeſcenſion to the Meaſures of Men. He will reaſonably allow, and abate, for our many Temptations and Diſtracting Thoughts, our Natural Backwardneſs, and Forgetfulneſs, and other Frailties ſo incident to our preſent State and Circum-

 ſtances.

ſtances. And when all that is candidly deducted, the reſt, which in our Circumſtances we are honeſtly and fairly able to Do, will paſs for ſerving him with all the heart and ſtrength, according to the Commandment.

Queſt. How will you make that out?

Anſw. Becauſe the *Scripture* Declares, he will *bear in Reaſon with our Infirmities*, Heb. 5. 2. And becauſe he has done ſo in ſeveral judged Caſes, expreſly declaring of ſeveral, that they have kept this Commandment, when they needed theſe abatements. Thus, of *Aſa* it is ſaid, that *his Heart was Perfect before God*, 1 King. 15. 14. And of *David*, that *he followed God with his whole Heart*: Yea, that *he turned not aſide from any thing he commanded him, all his days, except in the matter of Uriah.* 1 King. 14 8. and c. 15. 5. And of *Joſiah*, that *he did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, neither declining to the Right Hand, nor to the left*, 2 King. 22. 2. And of *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth*, that *they walked before God, in all the Ordinances of the Law, Blameleſs*, Luk. 1. 6. Now all theſe were Perſons of our own Frailties, and Infirmities. They were defective in their Care, as we are; and, though they went beyond the pitch of others, yet fell below the utmoſt of their poſſibilities, as the *Scriptures* have recorded of them, in † ſeveral inſtances. They ſerved God, indeed, *with all their Souls*, in one ſenſe of the Precept,

† 2 *Chron.* 16. *ver.* 1, 10, 13.

1 *Sam.* 21 1, 2. 2 *Sam.* 19. 29. 2 *Chron.* 35 21, 22, 23.

cept, as that notes their *adhering only to his Worſhip*, and allowing no part of their Heart to any *Idol God*. But, as it notes the *intireneſs of Degrees* in ſerving him: Such failings, as were pardonable under humane Circumſtances and infirmities, were firſt taken out, and ſo much as they were able to do after that abatement, was judged their *ſerving God with all their Heart*, according to the Commandment.

Queſt. Will *Chriſt* then after he has thus made the moſt of their good Performances, make *reaſonable Allowances* alſo for mens *Slips* and *Failures*, either in committing ill, or in omitting Good things?

Anſw. Yes; when they fail in either, through ſome *innocent*, and *well meant Error*, or *Ignorance*: Or when they ſlip through pure haſte and unadviſedneſs, and are ſurprized into ſome ill Thoughts, or ſudden Paſſions, or raſh words, but correct themſelves as ſoon as they conſider what they have done, and do not continue in it with Obſervation. He will then have Compaſſion on theſe, when he comes as our Judge; as now he has, when he acts as our Prieſt, and intercedes for us. For as the *Jewiſh* Prieſts had, ſo *can he have compaſſion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous*, or, as the † word notes, he can *Suffer in moderation*, or *reaſonably bear with them*, Heb. 5. 2.

μετριοπαθῆν.

Queſt. But what if men are Ignorant, becauſe they neglect to learn their Duty, nay, perhaps ſtop their Eyes and Ears, and Refuſe to ſee, or be told of it? *Anſw.*

Anſw. Then that will be no excuſe to them, where they fail of performing it, they being, as St. *Peter* ſays, *willingly Ignorant*, 2 Pet. 3. 5.

Queſt. I perceive he will ſhew Favour towards our involuntary Failures. But this will not avail us, if he be Strict and Rigorous in judging of that Involuntarineſs. For, alas! what man doth all that is Poſſible, to prevent Ignorance, or Surprize? And if we do not all we can againſt them, he may ſay they come through our own wills and ſufferance, if he will judge in Srictneſs. Will he therefore ſhew Candor, in judging any eſcapes to be Pitiable, and unwill'd Miſcarriages; without which, all his Candor in other Things will not ſupport us in his Preſence?

Anſw. Yes. He will ſhew all Reaſonable Favour, in admitting Actions for involuntary, that a Child could expect from a Wiſe and Tender Father, or we experiment from one another. A marvellous Inſtance we have of his Proneneſs to make the beſt of ill Actions, in aſcribing his own Crucifixion, as is noted, to the *Jews* Ignorance, which ſeemed ſo lyable to be imputed to Envy, Malice, and ſuch other more inexcuſable Principles. Thus benign he was upon the Croſs, and he will be no leſs ſo when he appears in Court. He will only have more Glory and Power, not leſs Benignity and Candor there alſo.

Queſt.

Queſt. Chriſt our Judge, it ſeems, will very graciouſly bear with our involuntary failings. But will he bear alſo with any *willful Sins*, when we tranſgreſs wittingly, or againſt our Conſciences?

Anſw. No; for *whatever ill proceeds out of the Heart of man, defiles the man*, Mat. 15. 18. And tho innocent Ignorance plead ſome excuſe; yet *when a man knows to do good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. But if they truly Repent of theſe, and amend them before their Death, they ſhall not be Condemned for them at that great Day.

Queſt. O! how happy are we in this marvellous Clemency and Candor of our Judge, who will be ſo ready to make the moſt of our Good Deeds, and to connive at our ignorant and involuntary Failings, and to paſs over all our wilful Sins themſelves, upon our true Repentance.

But beſides theſe ignorant and inconſiderate Failings, have we not many other *Natural Infirmities*, that will need his Clemency and Favour towards us?

Anſw. Yes; the Natural Uncertainty of our Tempers; our Dulneſs in any Duties, more eſpecially at ſome times; our Diſtractions and wandring Thoughts in Prayers; our Deſires of Praiſe, and other indirect Aims, intruding into our beſt Actions; our Natural Backwardneſs to Good; our Remiſneſs and Faintneſs in performing it, and our being ſoon wearied with it; our Weakneſs

Weakneſs of Faith, in believing the unſeen Things God has promiſed; our great Adherence to Worldly and Senſible Things; and our Unaffectedneſs with Spiritual and Divine Objects, and the like. Theſe are Infirmities incident to the beſt Men, and will cling to us more or leſs, as long as we bear theſe Bodies about us, and converſe with the Things of this World.

Queſt. And will our Equitable and Benign Judge, ſhew favour to theſe infirmities, which are ſo inſeparable from our Natures?

Anſw. Yes. Were he only God, we might be more prone to fear, he would look more at the juſt Demand of God's Laws, and be little *touch'd with our Infirmities*, which hinder us from fully anſwering them. But for this very end he took our Nature upon him, ſubmitting to our infirmities, and conflicting with our Temptations, that having felt and experimented them in himſelf, he might be more feelingly tender, and Compaſſionate towards them in us. *He is ſuch an High-Prieſt*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *as is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted as we are in all Points, tho' without Sin. Therefore let us come with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace*, Heb. 4. 15, 16. *It behoved him*, ſays he again, *to be made like unto his Brethren in all things, that he might be*, as *Faithful* to God, ſo *merciful* to us, and *having been Tempted himſelf*, be the readier to

Conſider, and *Succour* our infirmities and *Temptations*, Heb. 2. 17, 18. This ſenſe of our infirmities, makes him, now he acts in Heaven as our *High-Prieſt*, moſt compaſſionately to recommend them to God's mercy. And the ſame ſenſe he will have of them, when he ſits upon us as our *Judge*, and then we may be ſure, he will Graciouſly Diſpenſe that mercy towards them which before he interceded for.

Queſt. Beſides theſe Natural infirmities, we are ſorely kept back by many *ſupervening Diſadvantages*. Particularly, by multiplicity of Buſineſs; which cauſes much diſtraction of Thoughts, and Haſte in Diſpatch, whence ariſe many Errors. By the greatneſs of Temptations; as when we are haſtily driven to do ill, through ſome great and ſudden Terrours, or urgent neceſſities, to ſecure our Lives, or ſuſtenance. And by our Bodily indiſpoſitions; as when Sickneſs, or habitual Pain and uneaſineſs, or a continual ſucceſſion of croſs Accidents and Provocations, make us Peviſh and impatient, or betray us into other raſh miſcarriages. And will our Candid favourable Judge, make abatements for theſe *Providential diſadvantages*?

Anſw. Yes; all juſt and reaſonable abatements he will exactly conſider, and fairly and equitably allow for them. *They that ſinned without Law*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *ſhall be judged without Law*, that is, with ſuch abatements, as are allowable to thoſe, who

who wanted the Law; not according to ſuch ſtricter Terms, as are reaſonably exacted of all, who enjoy'd it, *Rom.* 2. 12. *The time of Heathen ignorance*, ſaith he again, *God winked at*: expecting leſs from thoſe, who had the great diſadvantage of walking in the dark, *Act.* 17. 30. Where theſe diſadvantages betray men into haſte, and inadvertence, and a pitiable involuntarineſs, he will graciouſly connive at them, as he did at † St. *Paul*'s undutifulneſs to *Ananias*, upon a ſudden provocation; and *Job*'s many fretful expoſtulations, under a moſt uneaſie Body, and heavy Afflictions; and where they bring guilt, by drawing us in to yield, and conſent to thoſe ſins, whereto they expoſe us; on their account he will exact the leſs, and ſuch ſins will be ſooner expiated, and the Judge eaſilier ſatisfied, with a more moderate Repentance.

† Act. 23. 2, 3, 5.

Queſt. That which through the merits of *Chriſt*, muſt gain us acceptance, is our good deeds. But may not the beſt of us all find defects enow even in theſe?

Anſw. Yes. Our Zeal for God is not all Flame, and inexhauſtible activity, as St. *Paul*'s was. We are not ſo prompt and forward in any act of Love to our dear Lord, as St. *Peter*; ſo ſlow to Anger, as *Moſes*; ſo perſevering in Patience, as *Job*; ſo intirely affected with Divine Things, and formed after Gods own Heart, as *David*. When we attain to be ſubmiſſive un-

der Croſſes, perhaps we do not arrive, with any great affectionateneſs, to thank God for them: tho' we contentedly bear reproaches for *Chriſt*; yet, it may be, we cannot take pleaſure in them, nor Count Poverty for his ſake, the trueſt Riches; or Labour and Travel, an eaſe; or Stripes and Impriſonments, a Triumph; or the Croſs, a Crown; like the Holy *Apoſtles*. When we do God's will, we are not ſo intent upon it, nor ſo ſenſibly delighted with it, as with our meat and drink, like our *Bleſſed Saviour*: we want that pitch of contempt for worldly things, and of command over our own Appetites; that height of Abſtinence and Self-denyal; that eaſe, delight, and watchfulneſs in Prayer; that Aſſiduity and Pleaſure in Divine Meditations; that depth of Humility, and poverty of Spirit; that fervour of Charity; that promptneſs to ſhew kindneſſes, and gladneſs in doing them; that backwardneſs to admit of Provocation; that eaſineſs in forgetting, and remitting injuries, which ſome of God's Saints have happily enjoy'd, and for which they have been moſt highly Rewarded.

Queſt And will not this failure of Degrees in good things, need a like Indulgence from this compaſſionate and benign Judge?

Anſw. Yes, and find it too. For theſe heighths and eminent degrees of Virtue, he propoſes to all, with more reſplendant Crowns of Glory to recompence them, and

and noble examples that lead on to them; but not as *indiſpenſable Articles of Salvation.* They are required as Things, which are hard for any to attain, praiſe worthy to attempt, and pardonable to miſs of them. They are Gems, that adorn and ſet off; or Radiant Crowns, which ſurround the brighteſt Stars; but Stars they are ſtill, which want theſe Glories.

Queſt. By this, there muſt be a great Latitude in virtuous attainments on the ſide of Bliſs, and *Chriſt* will not ſcrew up all he ſaves to the ſame certain Standard of perfection, or require them all to be of the ſame ſize?

Anſw. No; the Tenor of the Law it ſelf, is only to *obey God with* † *all our ſtrength:* but that ſtrength is more in ſome, than it is in others. There are *weak*, as well as *ſtrong*, among *Chriſt's* accepted Servants. And as different Magnitudes among the Glorified Saints, as there are among the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, in the Prophet † *Daniels*, and St. † *Pauls*; or the different *Rooms* and *Manſions* of a Stately Palace, in our *Bleſſed* † *Lords* reſemblance. Nay, St. *Paul* could ſay, *he labour'd more abundantly than they all*, even among the *Bleſſed Apoſtles* themſelves, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. Thus do very widely diſtant, and unequal virtues, all meet in the place of Bliſs, and are each Beatified in their ſeveral Proportions. *He that ſoweth much, ſhall reap much; and he that ſoweth little ſhall reap little*, ſaith the

† Luk. 10. 27.

† Dan. 12. 3.

† 1 Cor. 15 41, 42.

† Joh. 14. 2.

Apoſtle, but both are to reap ſomething, † *Mat.25. 15.* 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. And in the *Parable* † *according to their ſeveral Abilities*, one Servant improved his *Pound* to ten *Pounds*, Luk 19. 16. *another* his, to five *Pounds*, v. 18. and a *third*, only *doubled* his, Mat. 25. 22. But yet all theſe were welcomed, with a *well done, thou Good and Faithful Servant.* And as he that gain'd *Ten Pounds*, had *the Rule over ten Cities*; and he who gain'd *five*, had *Authority over five Cities*: ſo he, that only *doubled his Talents*, was recompenſed with a proportionable Reward, *Luk.* 19. 17, 19. and *Mat.* 25. 22, 23.

Queſt. I ſee *Chriſt* will not require us all, to be as tall in Spiritual ſtature as *Apoſtles*, but will graciouſly accept of inferiour virtues, and encourage them with proportionable Recompences. But what will you ſay, if even theſe ſmall and ſlender things, are performed with much *Difficulty* and *Reluctance*? It may be, in the little good we do, we are not forward to catch at good motions, nor preſently yield to a virtuous Diſcourſe, or good Advice, but adhere a while to our own ſelf-will, chiefly in caſes againſt our own humour, inclinations or former opinions, though we do the thing at laſt, after ſome diſputings with our ſelves. And will this gracious Judge accept of ſuch ſlow, and backward ſervices?

Anſw. Yes; he that ſtood out at firſt, and *ſaid he would not go work in the Vineyard*, but

but *after* he had better conſidered of it, *repented, and went*, is judged by our Saviour to be of the number of thoſe, that *do the will of his Father*, Mat. 21. 29, 31. Eaſineſs, and alacrity in cloſing with good, is a perfection of virtue, and ſhall receive a greater Recompence. But if we obey at all, though it be with Reluctance and Diſputings, we ſhall be in the Liſt of Servants, and not of Rebels, and receive rewards ſtill, though in ſmaller Proportions. Albeit *the Fleſh luſt againſt the Spirit*, yet if *we do not fulfill its Luſts*, but the Spirit prevails, *we walk in the Spirit*, and are truly *Regenerate*, as St. *Paul* ſays, *Gal.* 5. 16, 17.

Queſt. But, alas! the little good we do is not only thus defective in degrees, but is oft-times polluted by *impure mixtures*. When we do an act of honour to God, for inſtance, we are too apt, perhaps, to make it ſerve our own vanity more or leſs, and to ſeek thereby our own Praiſe. In cenſuring and reproving others Vices, it may be, in ſome degree, we gratifie our own peeviſhneſs, or other corrupt paſſions. And ſo in other Caſes. And can we expect any reward at the hands of this Benign Judge, for ſuch impure Services?

Anſw. Yes; through his infinite mercy and goodneſs. He is ſo Candid, and inclined to make the moſt of what is good, that he is ready to overlook ſome compaſſionable and leſſer ill, which is twiſted with it; paſſing by the ill, when they are

humbled and ſorry for it; and not throwing away the good for the evil's ſake. Thus in the mixt action of the *Egyptian Midwives*; he *commends*, and *rewards* their *Pious Charity*, and paſſes over their *Officious falſeneſs*, Exod. 1. 19, 20, 21. And in *Rahab*'s caſe, he recompences her *Faith in the true God*, and *friendſhip for the Spyes*, and winks at the inſincerity of her *feign'd excuſe*, Jam. 2. 25. and Joſh. 2. 4, 5, 9. yea, in cenſuring, not only the virtues, but the liberties of men, when they are juſtifiable in the main, but culpable in ſome pitiable circumſtance, he is apt to obſerve in the Action what may bear it out, and when they are humbled for the reſt, to draw a vail over what may pitiably be connived at: as our Lord did in mentioning *David*'s *eating of the Shew-bread*, vindicating him on account of that neceſſity which authorized, not cenſuring him on account of that falſhood whereby he procured it, *Mat.* 12. 3, 4.

Queſt. But is it not ſaid, that if we *Pray*, or *give Alms*, or *Faſt*, for the *Praiſe of men*, *we ſhall loſe our reward*, Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16.

Anſw. Yes; when the main deſign of our Prayers, or Alms, or other good Deeds, is to be commended, and we ſhould not do them but in hopes of that. For in Acting Principally for commendations ſake, we ſerve our own Pride and Vanity, but do not ſerve God. But when our chief aim

aim in it, is to pleaſe God, he accepts a Good work, though ſome pitiable defect adhere, or pardonable faultineſs be unwarily let in and combined with it.

Queſt. But in contemplating all this Indulgence of our Judge, we muſt not think his favour will paſs into fondneſs, which will bear with all we do, and ſpy no faults in us?

Anſw. No; as he is a good and candid, ſo, as I noted before, is he a moſt Righteous and juſt Judge. What he will give to *our infirmities*, St. *Paul* calls † *moderate* and *reaſonable allowance*, Heb. 5. 2. He bears in him the moſt exact temperament of Mercy, and Severity: being moſt prone to Mercy, in every compaſſionable Caſe; and as inexorably bent on Juſtice, where 'tis reaſonable, and fit ro inflict Vengeance. † μετριοπαθεῖν.

Queſt. You have ſhewn me, that *Chriſt* will uſe all this Candor in conſtructions, and make theſe favourable Allowances when we are brought to his Bar upon our Tryals. Would he not have us in the mean time, to promiſe to our ſelves, and expect all this?

Anſw. Yes; or elſe conſidering the infirmities and defects of moſt, if not of all his Followers, we could never have any comfortable hope in him; much leſs ſo great, as to deſire, and *Pray for his Appearance.* And yet the *Apoſtles* give this, as the Character of good and acceptable Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, who may therefore hope to be made happy, when they are qualified for it according to Humane meaſures. The *Crown of Righteouſneſs is for me, and all that love his appearing*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Look for, and*, by your Prayers, *haſte on the coming of the great Day of God*, ſaith St. *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3. 12. *Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly*, ſaith St. *John*, Rev. 22. 20. And in our daily Prayers, our Lord himſelf has taught us, *every day* to ſay, *thy Kingdom come.*

Queſt. Are we not indebted for all this indulgence, to the merit of his Death?

Anſw. Yes; for *we are accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have Redemption through his Blood*, Eph. 1, 6. 7. And owing all to him, we muſt both *Pray*, and *give thanks* for it *in his Name*, Joh. 14. 13. & Eph. 5. 20.

Queſt. All theſe acts of favour you have recited, are marvellous inſtances of Gods clemency to all his faithful Servants; and the Goſpel, I ſee encourages us to expect them at his hands. But are we ſure at that Day, God will ſtand to theſe Goſpel Terms?

Anſw. Yes; moſt ſure. For he never repents of his promiſes, nor can deny himſelf. Beſides, the ſame *Jeſus*, who once came from God to make us theſe gracious offers, is then to come and Judge us according to them, and make good his own Propoſals. Nay, ſince there may ſeem the ſame Reaſon, for his retaining them on

to

to the conſummation, as for his reſuming them at the Reſurrection, he may probably come, as ſome of the *Ancients* have thought, with the Glorious Scars of the Spear and Nails, and the ſigns of his Meritorious wounds, which purchaſed all this Grace, about him. And then, as all the Wicked † *ſhall look on him whom they have pierced,* with horror and conſternation: ſo ſhall the Righteous, with unſpeakable comfort, moſt joyfully beholding in his wounds, both the heighth of their moſt dear and compaſſionate Judge's Love, and the Price and aſſurance of their own Salvation. †*Rev.*1.7.

Queſt. This indulgence of our Almighty Judge, will be an inexhauſtible Fountain of raviſhing joy and comfort, to all ſerious and conſiderate minds. And, indeed, without ſuch clemency as you have deſcribed, the thoughts of the future judgment, muſt needs be a very melancholly conſideration to the beſt Perſons. But expecting ſo much Candor and Benignity from him, they have cauſe enough, not only to look for, but to love and deſire his appearing. But what ſhall be the effect of all this to good men?

Anſw. They ſhall be ſentenced to an Everlaſting Life, and Rewarded with all the Glory, and Happineſs of an Eternal Kingdom. For having fairly, and impartially heard their Cauſe, and made all theſe Allowances, and found them Righteous, he will ſay to them, *Come ye Bleſ-*

ſed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World, Mat. 25. 34.

Queſt. And in that Allotment, and Proportioning of Rewards, will he conſider the Difficulties, and Oppoſitions in Doing Good, which ſome Men meet withal above others?

Anſw. Yes. As theſe Tryals and Temptations, are Proofs of a greater Love, they will in proportion be a Ground of a Greater Reward. Thus St, *Paul* ſays, the *adding of Affliction to his Bonds*, or Multiplying his Trouble in *preaching of the Word*, would ſurely *turn to his greater Salvation* in the End, *Phil.* 1. 16, 19.

Queſt. Will he alſo conſider the Coſtlineſs of it, as when 'tis done, with hazard, or Loſs of their Friends or Eſtates, or, it may be, of their Lives?

Anſw. Yes; one ſingle Act under ſuch hazards, may ſhew as much Religious Love and Zeal, as would ſuffice to great Numbers, when they are free from ſuch incumbrances. When we obey God with preſent Damage, he will not only conſider our Services, but our Loſs in his Cauſe; and recompence abundantly, not only all we did, but likewiſe all we ſuffered for him. For *every one that forſakes Houſes, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Name's ſake*, ſays our Saviour, *ſhall receive* therefore *an hundred fold*, Mat 19. 29. And *the*

* *Mar-*

Martyrs that were beheaded for the Witneſs of Jeſus, ſhall riſe firſt, and Reign with Chriſt a thouſand years; but the Reſt of the Dead, not till the thouſand years are finiſhed, Rev. 20. 4, 5. And therefore whenſoever God calls Men to ſuffer for Righteouſneſs, they muſt not look upon it as a Calamitous Scourge; but as a Favour and Priviledge, ſuch Suffering being ſent, in Truth, as opportunities of accumulating Bliſs, and ſecuring to themſelves, not only more ample, but, when their Sufferings proceed to Blood, more early ſhares of the Future Glories. *To you 'tis given*, ſaith St. *Paul, in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake*, Phil. 1. 29. *Count it all joy*, ſaith St. *James, when you fall into diverſe Temptations*, Jam. 1. 2. *When you are Reviled, and Slandered, and Perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*, ſays our Saviour, then think your ſelves *Bleſſed, and Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for your Reward in Heaven ſhall be great* for it, Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. As the *Apoſtles* did, who, *when the Council had beaten them, departed from their Preſence, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt's Name*, Act. 5. 40, 41. And the *Hebrews*, who *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods, as knowing they had in Heaven a better and more Durable Subſtance*, Heb. 10. 34.

Queſt. But numbers of the Evils we endure, come not on us for keeping God's Commandments, but only as our ſhare of that

that Misery and Trouble, which God has allotted for us in this Life. And will he at that Day Rate these, and consider any persons having endured more Poverty, Oppression, Shame, or Sickness in this World, than other good Persons, who yet are no better, nor Dearer to God, than themselves?

Answ. I suppose he will; for he is *no Respecter of Persons.* And therefore when Persons of equal, or higher Goodness, through the present ordering of his Providence, want much of their Brethrens Temporal Encouragements, they may hope for a more Liberal share in a better place. For his extraordinary Measure of *Evil things*, in this *present time*, *Lazarus* had a proportionable surplusage of *Good*, in *Abraham's Bosom*, Luk. 16. 24. *Blessed are ye that* live in *Poverty*, and *Hunger now*, says our Saviour, *for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.* Noteing thereby, such an ample Recompence for these present Evils in the next World, as would render them to all good Men, not the Miseries, as this World esteems them, but the truest Favours, and Gainful Blessings of their Lives, Luke 6. 20, 21. This seeming inequality of Gods present Distributions, which lies upon Providence, will then be cleared up by a full and Liberal Amends. For *then*, *God's Righteousness in Judgment*, that in great part lay hid before, will be fully *Revealed* and made manifest, *Rom.* 2. 5.

Quest.

Queſt. But when he deals thus graciouſly with all the good, how will he proceed with *ill Men*?

Anſw. In all the equity of a fair Tryal, but yet to a juſt Condemnation. When he bears with all Natural Infirmities, and reaſonably abates for outward Impediments, and connives at involuntary Failings, and forgives all the ſins of the Penitents; he will avenge the willful Sins of all impenitent Perſons, according to their Deſerts. For *he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, Act. 17. 31. *To the wicked, he will ſay, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23. And when *they, that have done Good, come forth to the Reſurrection of Life; they that have done Evil, ſhall come to the Reſurrection of Damnation*, Joh. 5. 29.

Queſt. What Puniſhment ſhall theſe Miſerable Men be condemned to?

Anſw. All the Plagues of *Hell*, where their Spirits ſhall always be gnawed and preyed upon, by the Worm of Conſcience; and their Bodies ſcorched with Fire and Flames. *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. Yea, they ſhall have all the ſmart of Fire, where 'tis the hotteſt: being *caſt into a Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13. 42. and *into a Lake of Fire, burning with Brimſtone*, Rev. 19. 20. And *there*, as *the Fire is not quenched*, ſo *their Worm* of Conſcience *Dyeth not*, Mar. 9. 44.

Queſt. And when ſhall all theſe Dreadful Miſeries ſeize them? *Anſw.*

Anſw. So ſoon as this Terrible Sentence, of *Go ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire*, is ſolemnly paſſed upon them. For his way of Effecting things, is by his Omnipotent Word. When he ſaid, *let there be Light*, or *Earth*, immediately there was ſo at *firſt*, Gen, 1. 3, 9. And when he ſhall ſay, *go ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire*, in obedience to that all-powerful Word, ſtreight-way a Fire ſhall come forth from his Preſence, and ſhall ſeize on the whole Earth, and Air, where his Adverſaries Abode is, and ſet it all on fire about them, turning all this lower World, which probably thenceforwards is to ſerve for no other uſe, into one intire Globe of Fire, or Flaming Furnace. The Fire that ſhall Torment and Scorch the Damned, at *the coming of our Lord*, *ſhall burn up the Earth*, *and melt the Elements*, and Crack *the Heavens*, making them *diſſolve*, *and paſs away with a Great Noiſe*, ſays St. *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12. *The Heavens*, *and Earth that are now*, ſays he again, *are kept in ſtore*, *and reſerved unto Fire*, *againſt the Day of Judgment*, *and Perdition of Ungodly Men*; the Fire that ſhall break out from God upon the Ungodly, being, it ſeems, to ſeize and diſſolve them, *ver.* 7. And *the Fire that comes down from God*, *to devour and torment the Devil*, *and all he has deceived*, *Day and Night*, *for ever*; ſhall make *the Earth and Heaven that now is*, *flee away*, as may ſeem from St. *John*, and leave nothing, *but a devouring Hell*, or a

World

World of never Dying Fire and Flame, in its place, *Rev.* 20. 9, 10, 11, 14. and c. 21. 1. And when once this is kindled, thoſe forelorn Wretches may † cry in vain to *the Hills to fall on them*, and *to the Rocks to cover them.* For every Cave is then a Furnace, and every high Hill a Flaming Mountain: a Fervent Heat has melted all the World, and nothing is to be felt or ſeen, but boyling Element, and ſcorching Fire all about them.

† *Rev.* 6. 15, 16.

Queſt. Oh! the wonder of God's Mercy, which ſhall then be diſplayed towards all his Saints, and the Terror of his Judgments, which ſhall then be inflicted on all incorrigible Offenders! Muſt not this expectation of *Chriſt's future Judgment* of us, for all our Actions, make us very careful how we lead our Lives?

Anſw. Yes; it ſhould do it above all things. We muſt account for all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions. And an Eternity of higheſt Bliſs, or Woe, depends upon the account we make. And therefore we had need to do all things here with ſuch care, that when we are taken to task at that Great Day, we may give in a good, and comfortable account of them. Seeing God will be moſt terrible in puniſhing all ungodly Sinners, *what manner of Perſons ought we to be, in all holy Converſation, and Godlineſs*, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12.

Queſt. That day, you ſay, will ſurprize the World, as a *Thief in the Night*, and it

is moſt uncertain to every Man, when he ſhall be called to it. Ought not that to make us every day ſecure our Peace with God, and watch always to be in a *readineſs*, and *preparation* for that great Account?

Anſw. Yes; there is no room for preparation afterwards, if we are unprepared when he calls, as the *Fooliſh Virgins* experienced to their coſt. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day, nor the Hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh*, Mat. 25. 11, 12, 13.

Queſt. Since *Chriſt* has reſerved the judgment of all Men to himſelf, who beſt knows, and who alone is able unerringly to judge of them: Muſt not this make us wary, not to judge and cenſure one another?

Anſw. Yes, by all means; for this Judgment he eſteems an uſurpation upon his Office. *Why doeſt thou judge thy Brother, or why doeſt thou ſet at naught thy Brother? We ſhall all ſtand at the Judgment Seat of Chriſt*, Rom. 14. 10. *Who art thou that Judgeſt another Man's Servant? To his own Maſter he ſtands, or falls*, ver. 4. Nay, he tells us, as we have no Authority to do it, ſo we are unfit for it, becauſe we cannot ſee each others Hearts; and ſo, in many Cenſures we paſs, can have no true Judgment of Men, and Actions, as he has. *Judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will bring to Light the hidden things of Darkneſs,*

neſs, and make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Queſt. And ſince God will clear the Innocent, before Men and Angels, and in his judgment ſet all right at laſt: Is not this a ſupport to us, under all the unjuſt Slanders, and wrongful Judgments we meet with here in this World?

Anſw. Yes; for it ſhews all will be fully wiped off, if we can have a little patience. Our Innocence ſhall ſhine the brighter, for the Vail that was drawn before it, as the Sun doth when he recovers from a Cloud: For then *God ſhall bring forth our Righteouſneſs as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day*, Pſal. 37. 6. So that in ſuch Caſes, we may all ſay, as St. *Paul, it is a very ſmall thing with me, that I ſhould be judged of Mans Judgment*, becauſe *he that judgeth me is the Lord*, who will ſhortly reverſe all the Errors of Mens Cenſures, and ſhew them Publickly to all the World, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Holy Ghoſt.

The Contents.

The Holy Ghoſt is God. What he hath done for our Salvation. Of his extraordinary Gifts beſtowed on Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, which were for the Planting, and Propagating Chriſt's Religion. 1. The gift of inſpiration, in Revelations. This beſtowed upon the Apoſtles. Theſe Revelations they have fully ſet down in the Holy Scriptures, after which we are not to look for any others. This Gift, of knowing Religion by immediate Revelation, neceſſary only in Apoſtles, and Evangeliſts. And deſign'd for the Infancy of the Church. Other Rules, whereby to examine new Lights and Revelations in Religion. As, try them by the Scriptures. Call for their Miracles, wherewith God ſtill empower'd men, when he ſent them to reveal new Things. No need of Miracles, when men pretend only to revive old, and acknowledged Revelations. If they ſhew Miracles, for things plainly againſt Scripture, they muſt work more, than were wrought to confirm the Scripture. An account of Joel 2. 28, 29. Which ſeems to foretell the commonneſs of Revelations among Chriſtians. The firſt Inſpirations were not only in Doctrinal Points, but alſo

in Devotions. And about Temporal matters. Subſervient to this Gift of Revelations, was the Gift of diſcerning Spirits. This done afterwards by ordinary Rules. And the Gift of utterance and boldneſs. Their minds not influenced by this conſtantly, and at all Times. But ordinarily they were, and eſpecially when they had moſt need of it. 2. Of the Gift of Miracles. Miracles a Proof of Divine Revelation. How diſcernible from Lying Wonders, by the Doctrines built on them. By their ends and uſefulneſs, and being wrought on needful Occaſions. Of the miraculous Gift of healing Diſeaſes. This ſometimes by anointing with Oyl. And Prayers. Of caſting out Devils, and other Miracles. Of delivering to Satan, what it was, and why ſo call'd. Of Joy in Tribulations, and what was extraordinary in that of the Apoſtles. To the working theſe Miracles, there was always required Faith in him that wrought them. And ſometimes Faith in him that received them. 3. of the Gift of Strange Tongues. The ends of this. And of the Gift of Interpreting ſuch Strange Tongues. What is meant by the Holy Ghoſt being a Comforter. The Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is a Sin againſt theſe extraordinary Gifts. Why Blaſphemy againſt him more irremiſable, than againſt the Father or the Son. Extraordinary Gifts no mark of a juſtified State. Of Offices appointed by the Holy Ghoſt. Some of

theſe Temporary, others to continue through all Times, the preſent Officers ordaining Succeſſors of the Holy Ghoſt's ordinary Graces. By theſe we may know he dwells in us. Our care required towards theſe. Of Preventing Grace in outward advantages, and inward good motions. Directions how we are to endeavour after ſaving Graces, in ſix Particulars. How God gives them, though we are thus to acquire them. The Holy Ghoſt works alſo in us Spiritual Joys and Comforts. This he doth not in all the minds he ſanctifies, becauſe ſome are unfit for them through intrinſick impediments. But they are withheld from none, through his Arbitrary withdrawing, which ſome count Spiritual Deſertion.

Queſt. WHat is the *eighth* Article of the *Creed*?

Anſw. I *Believe in the Holy Ghoſt*.

Queſt. Is the Holy Ghoſt very God?

Anſw. Yes. *For Lying to the Holy Ghoſt*, is call'd *Lying to God*, Act. 5. 3, 4. And
† 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11. because *Chriſtians* are the Temple *of the Holy Ghoſt*, they are ſaid to be *the Temple*
* *Pſ.* 139. 7. *of God*, 1 Cor. 3. 16. And all the Proper-
† *Heb.* 9. 14. ties of Divinity are aſcribed to him; as, † *knowing all things*; ubiquity, or * *Pre-*
* *Gen.* 1. 2. *ſence in all Places*; † *Eternity*, or duration
Job 26. 13. through all Times; * *Creating the World*,
† *Iſa.* 42. 8. and 48. 11. being joyned with God, who *will not* † *impart his Glory to another*, as an Object of

Faith

Faith and *Worſhip*, in * *Baptiſm*, and the † *Apoſtolical Benediction*, and the like.

* *Mat.* 28. 19.

† 2 *Cor.* 13, 14.

Queſt. But if both the *Father* and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* be God, are there not three Gods?

Anſw. No; becauſe *theſe three are One*, that is, one in Nature, or * one Thing, 1 *Joh.* 5. 7. There is a Trinity of Perſons, but theſe three are myſteriouſly united in Nature, and dependance: which makes but one God-head, not three Gods.

* ἓν.

Queſt. But why is he call'd *Holy*, more than the Father, or the Son? Since Holineſs was reckon'd one of the Divine Attributes, are not all the three Perſons, who are equally God, equal alſo in Holineſs?

Anſw. Yes. But though they are equally Holy, in Nature, or Eſſence: yet is he particularly ſtyled ſo, in reſpect of his Operations. For as God the *Father* particularly undertook for the *Creation* of men; and God the *Son*, for the *Redemption* of them; ſo did God the *Holy Ghoſt*, for their *Sanctification*, being always ready to work holineſs in thoſe, who ſet themſelves to fear God, and to ſerve our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. *We are ſaved, by the renewal of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. 3. 5, 6. And *purified through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. 1. 22.

Queſt. Why do we profeſs Faith, and truſt in him?

Anſw. Becauſe we are to receive all our Graces, and preparations for Eternal Glo-

ry from him. For after *Chriſt* had Redeemed us with his Blood, and aſcended into Heaven; the Reſt, which was to be done further for our Salvation here on Earth, was left to the care of the *Holy Spirit*, whom *Chriſt* ſent down as his ſubſtitute, to ſupply his abſence, and miniſter whatſoever he left wanting to his Body, which is the *Church*, to perfect it in *Faith* and *Holineſs*.

Queſt. By this I perceive, a great part of *Chriſtian Knowledge*, lyes in underſtanding what the *Holy Spirit* has done, and is ſtill to do for us. Pray what has he beſtowed, for the effecting of this great work?

Anſw. Gifts of two ſorts. 1. *Extraordinary*, beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, for the Planting and Eſtabliſhing *Chriſt's* Church and Religion. 2. *Ordinary*, that are given in common to all others, for every particular man's Salvation.

Queſt. What are his *extraordinary Gifts* beſtowed upon the Holy *Apoſtles*, for the Planting and Eſtabliſhing of *Chriſt's* Church and Religion?

Anſw. They conſiſt not only of *Gifts*, but likewiſe of *Offices*, which he is the Author of.

Queſt. What are the *Extraordinary Gifts* he gave them to this end?

Anſw. I ſhall reduce them to *three*. The Gift of *Inſpiration*, which revealed Chriſtianity to themſelves; of *Miracles*, which enabled

enabled them to prove it undeniable unto others; and of *Tongues*, whereby they could publiſh it over all the World, and be underſtood by men of every Language.

Queſt. When were theſe extraordinary Gifts beſtowed?

Anſw. Firſt, at the *Feaſt of Pentecoſt* upon the *Twelve*, when the *Spirit deſcended on each of them, in the ſhape of Cloven Tongues*, Act. 2. 3. And afterwards, generally upon others, at the impoſition of their hands, as abundantly appears, from St. *Luke's* account of the *Acts* of the *Holy Apoſtles*.

Queſt. And all theſe you ſay, were to enable them to Plant and Propagate their Religion?

Anſw. Yes; for by theſe Gifts, which are call'd *the Promiſe of the Father*, Act. 1. 4. (that is, that *Spirit*, which *Chriſt* had promiſed to *ſend them from the Father*, Joh. 15. 26.) the *Holy Ghoſt* was to act the Part of an *Advocate*, (as the † word *Paraclete* ſignifies, and is accordingly render'd, 1 Joh. 2. 1.) which was to plead his Cauſe to the unbelieving World. For *when* this *Comforter*, or *Advocate is come*, ſaith our Lord, *he will reprove*, or convince, *the world of* theſe three Things. *Of Sin, becauſe they believe not on me*, *i. e.* of the ſinfulneſs of infidelity. *Of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to the Father*; *i. e.* of my being a Righteous Perſon, and of Gods owning me for ſuch, though the *Jews* condemned me as a Malefactor. *And of Judgment, becauſe*

† παρά-κλητος.

cauſe the Prince of this World is judged. i. e. of the downfall of *Idolatry* and *Demon-worſhip*, becauſe the *Devil* is to be caſt out of the Heathen Temples by this Almighty Advocate, and all his Oracles ſilenced, *Joh.* 16. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Queſt. The *firſt* of theſe Gifts beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, you ſay was the Gift of *Inſpiration*, which revealed *Chriſt*'s Religion fully to themſelves. Did the *Apoſtles* receive their Religion from God, and were they inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt in what they Taught?

Anſw. Yes; *all Scripture is given by the inſpiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. Thus God inſpired *Moſes*, and the *Holy Prophets* of old: for *no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, nor came by the will of man, i. e.* therein the *Prophets* did not ſpeak their own ſenſe, and reaſon: *but Holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. And after the ſame manner, *Chriſt* promiſes the *Apoſtles*, that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould teach them. *The Holy Ghoſt*, when he ſhall come, *ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you*, Joh. 14. 26. And *when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth*, Joh. 16. 13.

Queſt. But had not *Chriſt* been their Teacher for ſeveral years together? and then what need was there for the *Holy Ghoſt* to come after him, for a further Inſtructer?

Anſw. *Chriſt* taught them by outward, and humane means, as one man doth another. And in this way, though he took care abundantly to propoſe Things to them, yet after all, they being Perſons of ſlow and ruſtick underſtandings, were very liable to forget, or miſconceive them: as 'tis plain they did the *Nature of his Kingdom*, the *Reaſons of his Death*, and his *Reſurrection*. But when the Holy Ghoſt came upon them, he inwardly enlightned their minds, and fill'd them with all variety of Heavenly Truth, bringing to their remembrance whatſoever *Chriſt* had ſaid, and ſupplying whatſoever he deſignedly †omitted, till they were better able to bear it. And though he did not teach them all things at once, they being ignorant for ſome time after his deſcent, of **the calling of the Gentiles*: yet in a moment he made a ſtrange progreſs with them, and ſo far illuminated their minds, that immediately upon his coming down, they underſtand, and apply *Scriptures*, and *expound Prophecies*, and ſet up for Teachers of other men, *Act.* 2.

† *John* 16. 12, 13.

* *Acts* 10. & Ch. 11.

Queſt. And what knowledge they had of their Religion, you ſay was of his inſpiring?

Anſw. Yes; after once he took the conduct of them. Their way of *knowing all things*, as St. *John* told the *Church* in their Age, was by *an unction from the Holy one*, 1 Joh. 2. 20, 27. And *the Goſpel which was*

Preached

preached by me, ſaith St. *Paul*, *is not after Men*, i. e. of Mans deviſing. *For I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. 1. 11, 12. And of *all Holy Scripture*, it is declared, that it is *given by inſpiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16.

Queſt. 'Tis plain, indeed, they ſay they are inſpired, and taught of God. But have we any more than theſe Teſtimonies of *Scripture*, that is their own word and ſaying for it?

Anſw. Yes, the Miracles they wrought in confirmation of it. *They preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with Signs following*, Mar. 16. 20.

Queſt. I perceive the Holy Ghoſt did reveal God's will to them, and in the Holy *Scriptures* they have revealed it unto us. But in thoſe *Scriptures*, have they done it fully?

Anſw. Yes; for in that *Epiſtle*, which St. *Paul* ſent laſt to *Timothy*, before which, the greateſt Part of his other *Epiſtles*, and of the *Goſpel-Canon* was writ, he Declares of *all the Scriptures* then extant, that they *are able to make us wiſe unto Salvation*, being *Profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for inſtruction in Righteouſneſs. That the Man of God may be Perfect, throughly furniſhed* out of them *unto all Good works*, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. Nay ſome ſingle Books of Scripture, as the Particular Goſpels are

 full

full enough to this end. And accordingly St. *Luke* teſtifies of his Goſpel, that it contains *thoſe Things which all Chriſtians moſt ſurely believed*, and *wherein Theophilus*, an *Excellent* Perſon, and no way Defective in ſaving Knowledge, had been Principled and *inſtructed* Luk, 1. 1, 3, 4. and *all that Jeſus began to do and teach, till he was taken up*, Act. 1. 1, 2. All neceſſary Chriſtianity was Faithfully preached by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and they Faithfully ſet out his Life, and Preaching. And what St. *Luke* added afterwards, in the *Acts of the Holy Apoſtles*, was only an Hiſtorical Account of the Method they took, what they ſuffered, and how they ſucceeded in Preaching this Doctrine. And as for the *Epiſtles* of the ſeveral *Apoſtles*, which were accidentally, and occaſionally writ, for the Emergent Benefit of the Churches, they either repeat and preſs the ſame Things, or Comment upon them in fuller Explications, or Determine ſome Controverſies ſtarted in the Church about them, or confute ſome unchriſtian Opinions and Heretical corruptions of Goſpel-Truths, as is obvious to any careful, and intelligent comparer of them.

Queſt. Having therefore theſe *Scriptures* Faithfully conveyed to us, by God's Bleſſing, we muſt not look for, or liſten to any *New Revelation*?

Anſw. No, not of the Way to pleaſe God, and go to Heaven. *Chriſt*, our Great *Prophet*,

† Dan. 9. 24. *Prophet*, who *was to* † *Seal up Viſion and Prophecie*, having inſpired his *Apoſtles*, and fully Revealed all theſe things to us once already by them, it is a vain thing to fancy he ſhould do it over again.

Queſt. The Gift of Inſpiration then, or of having Religion immediately Revealed to them, was neceſſary only to *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, who were the firſt Publiſhers of it from God?

Anſw. 'Tis very true. And accordingly, in Suiting the *Gifts*, and *Miniſtries*, reckned up 1 *Cor.* 12. to the *word of Wiſdom*, or Goſpel Revelation, which is the Firſt, and Chiefeſt in the Liſt of *Gifts*, *v.*8. St. *Paul* adapts the Order of *Apoſtles*, as its Correſpondent, and the firſt and chiefeſt in the Number of *Miniſtries*, ver. 28. Inſpiration of Religion was only to fit and Qualifie them for that Office. Hence it is, probably, that

† 1 *John* 2. 20. it is by St. *John* called † *their Unction*, that is, I ſuppoſe, their inveſtiture in their Office: For, 'tis well known, the common way of inveſting Men in Offices, eſpecially in the *Prieſthood*, and *Prophetick* Office, was by *anointing*. And St. *Paul* infers his Authority in the *Apoſtolical Office*, from his inſpiration, becauſe *his Goſpel was not after Man*, but he was ſent out by God, and had it *immediately Revealed* to him by him, *Gal.* 1. 11, 12, 15, 16, 17. And the

† *John* 14. 26. Promiſe, that the † *Holy Ghoſt ſhould teach them all things, and* * *guide them into all*

* *John* 16. 13. *Truth*, was not made to any Chriſtian of ſucceeding

ſucceeding Times, but particularly to the Holy *Apoſtles*, with whom it is our Bleſſed Lord there Diſcourſes. And *the Unction among them, whereby they knew all things*, that St. * *John* ſpeaks of, was whilſt he himſelf was alive, and other *Evangeliſts*; not to add, moreover, that his Epiſtle ſeems writ among the lateſt of the *Books of the New Teſtament*. So that then, probably, they had among them the inſpirations of almoſt all the other *Apoſtles*.

* *John* 2. 20. 17.

Queſt. So that inſpiration of Religion was deſign'd only for the *Infancy of the Church*, whilſt it was a Planting, and Religion a Publiſhing, but was to ceaſe when that was done?

Anſw. Yes; it was ſo. *Knowledge, i. e.* inſpired Knowledge, *Propheſie*, and *Tongues*, were fitted, as St. *Paul* notes, only for the *Child-hood of the Church*, for that is the Similitude he uſes, in expreſſing the tranſitorineſs of theſe Gifts, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. *whilſt I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child*, &c. But theſe Helps of the Infant State, were to vaniſh, as it took Root, and grew up to Manhood. *When I became a Man, I put away Childiſh Things*, v. 11. *We know*, ſays he again, *in part, and we propheſie in part*: *i. e.* at preſent this inſpiration is imperfect, this Epiſtle being one of the earlieſt Writ, and the *Scripture-Canon* at that Time not being finiſhed, and generally come abroad. *But when that which is perfect is come*, i. e. as I conceive,

conceive, not only the Perfection of the other World, but a more Perfect State of the present Church, when the *Canon* shall be consummated, and commonly given out, *then that which is in part, shall be* superseded and *Done away*, v. 9, 10. As for *Charity*, that bright Gem among saving Graces, it indeed *never fails. But whether there be Prophesies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, i. e.* inspired Knowledge, *it shall vanish away*, v. 8.

Quest. In Christianity then, I see we must take up with the Holy *Scriptures*, and not look for new Revelations, except we would look also for a new Religion, and new *Apostles?*

Answ. Very right.

Quest. This is enough againſt any man, who pretends to *new Lights* and *Revelations* in Religion. But since there are many such in the World, can you give me any further Direction how to try them?

Answ. Yes; examine them *First* by the *Scriptures*, bringing those *New* Revelations to the *Old*, and then be sure, they are either inventions of Men, or Delusions of *Satan*, if they contradict it. *Tho we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have* already *preached unto you*, and which is set forth in Scripture, *let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any*, pretending never so much *Revelation*, *preach any other*

other Goſpel unto you, than that you have received, let him be accurſed, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

Queſt. What other way would you direct me to, for the Tryal of ſuch Pretenders?

Anſw. Secondly, call for their ſigns, or *Miracles*, as God's Token, to manifeſt that he ſpeaks by them. For when God ſends Men on new Meſſages, and Revelations, to teſtifie they come from him, and gain them credit, he empowers them to work Miracles, or give Signs, becauſe elſe they would go upon vain Errands. Thus, when God ſent *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites*, and he objected, that *they would disbelieve him, and ſay, God had not appeared unto him*, Exod. 4. 1. God owns the reaſonableneſs of the Objection, and impowers him to *turn his Rod into a Serpent*, and work other Signs from him, to gain Credit with them. Which he did, as he himſelf told *Moſes*, *that they may believe, that the Lord God of their Fathers hath appeared unto thee. And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe thee after the firſt ſign, that they will believe thee after the latter ſign.* Or, if *they disbelieve after that too*, thou ſhalt *work another Sign*, ver. 5. to ver 10.

Queſt. Have you any further Evidence of this?

Anſw. Yes; in *Chriſt* himſelf. For without Miracles, he did not require all Men to believe him, when he came in God's name; and then ſure, without them, they

are not bound to believe any other pretender to new Revelation. *If I had not done among them the Works which no other Man did, they had not had ſin* in disbelieving, *John* 15. 24.

Queſt. And this was ſtill the way of *Prophets*, when God ſent them?

Anſw. Yes; when he ſent them to reveal any *New Thing*. Indeed, when *Prophets* came only to preſs old Revelations, that ſtood confirmed by former Miracles, they needed not always to come with a New Sign. And this was the caſe of many *Ordinary Prophets* among the *Jews*, whom God ſpecially ſent and ſtirred up, to inforce ſome neglected Precepts, and chiefly the *Moral* and *Spiritual* Parts of the Law of *Moſes*. But when any pretended to any extraordinary Commiſſion, for reverſing of ſome Old, or ſetting up ſome New Rule, or Doctrine, as it was reſonable to expect they ſhould, they were always empowred to give a Sign, or work a Miracle, in Confirmation. And this is the Teſt God himſelf gives, whereby to know when he had ſent any one. *If thou ſay in thine Heart, how ſhall we know the Word, which the Lord hath not ſpoken? When a Prophet ſpeaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to paſs, that is the thing which the Lord hath not ſpoken, but the Prophet hath ſpoken preſumptuouſly, thou ſhalt not be afraid of him*, Deut. 18. 21, 22.

Queſt. So that no Prophet, pretending to

to New Revelation, was to be believed barely on his own word, till ſome ſign from God gave witneſs to it?

Anſw. No; the great Prophet of the Church, *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, did not expect it. *If I bear Witneſs of my ſelf, my Witneſs is not true, i. e.* ought not to paſs for true. *But there is another that beareth Witneſs of me, for the Works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame Works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me,* John 5. 31, 32, 36. And this is neceſſary, to prevent our being deceived. For *many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World,* 1 John 4. 1. And theſe come all in God's Name, though what they declare, is not his Revelation, but their own invention, or ſome *Satanical* Deluſion. And if we were to believe a Man inſpired, barely upon his own Word, ſince they all ſay they are, we ſhould believe all of them. So that to prevent being deceived, we muſt not take a Mans own Word for his being ſent thus of God, till he ſhews ſome Sign from him to atteſt it.

Queſt. You ſay they are miraculouſly aſſiſted, when they are ſent to reveal any New thing. Is there not a like neceſſity of Signs and Miracles then, when they only come to Remove Corruptions, and revive ſuch former acknowledged Revelations, as had Miracles to confirm them?

Anſw. No; to Perſons that own he ſpake it, God's *Word* has as much Authority as

his *Work*. Whilſt they have his clear Word to ſhew for themſelves, they are ſufficiently qualified to uſe his Name, to reprove and convince, on the ſcore and credit of *ordinary Miniſters*, without producing any *new* and *extraordinary Credentials*. Beſides, for theſe things, they may appeal to all the old Miracles wrought to teſtifie theſe Revelations. And accordingly, a great part of the *old Prophets*, under the *Jeweſh* State, coming to reduce men to the obedience of *Moſes*, to reprove ſins, and to reform abuſes, wrought no Miracles, it being enough for them to produce the Holy *Scriptures*, who only ſought to bring thoſe back to them, who had ſwerved from them. And this alſo was the Caſe of our *firſt Reformers*. They ſtudied no new ways, but only endeavour'd to reſtore Religion, which was much depraved in theſe Parts of the world, to that Form, which was at firſt moſt miraculouſly confirmed by *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*. And therefore their Proofs were not to be fetched from ſigns and wonders, as Men that introduced new, and unatteſted Tenets, but from the *Holy Scriptures*.

Queſt. But are we not told of *Falſe Prophets ſhewing Signs*, Mat. 24. 24? And what ſhall we ſay to them, if they alledge Miracles for falſe Things?

Rev. 13. 13, 14. & 16. 14.

Anſw. If they teach things contrary to the Scriptures, they muſt not only work Miracles for their contrary Opinions, but more, and greater than were wrought by

Chriſt

Chriſt and his *Apoſtles* to confirm the *Scriptures*. For here, all the Miracles wrought for the Scripture, are againſt them; ſince their pretended Miracles, are brought for a contrary Thing. And when our Faith is ſollicited by a competition of Miracles, as the Faith of the *Jews* was, between the Miracles of *Moſes* and thoſe of the *Magicians*, Exod. 7. 11, 22. and when any *Seducer gave ſigns*, to draw them to *Idolatry*, Deut. 13. 1, 2. we muſt believe that ſide which has the greateſt, and the moſt of them. And this will ſecure us againſt all the Errors and feign'd Miracles of new Lights and Pretenders. For 'tis certain, they will never ſhew the tenth part of thoſe Miracles, to confute any Doctrine contain'd in Scripture, that *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* have done, to confirm it.

Queſt. I confeſs, 'tis very clear from what you ſay, that the *Scripture* is the only Revelation we muſt ſtick to; and that in *matters of Religion*, we muſt not hearken to any other Pretenders to new Light and inſpiration. But doth not the Prophet *Joel* ſay, Revelations ſhould be common things among Chriſtians? *I will pour out my Spirit in thoſe days upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and Daughters ſhall Propheſie; your young men ſhall ſee Viſions, and your old men ſhall dream Dreams*, Joel 2. 28, 29.

Anſw. Yes; but by *thoſe days*, he means not all the days of Chriſtianity, but only the *days of the Apoſtles*, when ſuch Revela-

tions were common Things. For in thoſe ſame days, as it follows in *Joel*, *I will ſhew Wonders in Heaven, and in Earth*, ſaith God, *Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoak. And the Sun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the Moon into Blood, before the Great and Terrible day of the Lord come*, *i. e.* before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, whereof our Saviour interprets this paſſage, *Mat.* 24. 29. which deſtruction fell out in the *Apoſtolical* Age, before the death of St. *John*, *Joel* 2. 30, 31. And St. *Peter* ſays, theſe inſpirations foretold by *Joel*, were fulfilled, when the *Holy Ghoſt at Pentecoſt deſcended upon them. This is that which was ſpoken of by the Prophet* Joel, *it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall Propheſie*, &c. Act. 2. 16, 17, 18. So that *Joel*'s Prophecy of inſpirations doth not remain now to be fulfilled, but, as *Joel* himſelf foretold, and as St. *Peter* declared, was long ſince accompliſhed.

Queſt. But God gave theſe Revelations in the *Apoſtles* Age, and is not he the ſame God ſtill in ours?

Anſw. Yes; he is always the ſame God, but he doth not always do the ſame things. He came down before the *Jews*, in *Thunder* and *Fire upon Mount Sinai* † once, but he did not do ſo in after-times. He ſhed abroad the Gift of *Tongues*, and *Miracles*, upon the generality of Chriſtians in the *Apoſtles* days, but he has not done ſo in any

† *Exod.* 19. 16, 18.

any others ſince. He is the ſame God, and has the ſame care and kindneſs for his Church, in all Times: but he doth not always work the ſame effects, but only according to our occaſions and neceſſities. And immediate *Revelation* was neceſſary to the *Apoſtles* in their circumſtances, and as unneceſſary to us in ours.

Queſt. Were theſe inſpirations meerly about Doctrinal Things, and declaring the will of God, only in points of Faith, or manners?

Anſw. No; but ſometimes, in thoſe days of Revelation, they were inſpired alſo in their Devotions, with Prayers and Hymns, which was a bleſſing they were more ſenſible of in that Age, becauſe as yet they had no formed and eſtabliſhed Liturgies. Thus St. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, *every one in their Aſſemblies had* an inſpired *Pſalm*, as well as an inſpired *Doctrine*, Praying and Praiſing, as well as Preaching by Revelation, 1. *Cor.* 14. 26. And when they ſpoke by the *Gift of Tongues*, it was oft in *inſpired Hymns* and *Devotions: for he that ſpeaketh in an unknown Tongue*, ſaith he, *ſpeaketh unto God*, v. 2. he *Prays* to God, or *Praiſes* him in that ſtrange Gift of the *Spirit*, v. 14, 15, 16. And in the *Enthuſiaſms of Tongues*, which *fell on Cornelius* and his *Gentile Friends*, *they magnified God*, Act. 10. 40.

Queſt. Beſides theſe Revelations about *Religion*, and the way to Happineſs, had they not alſo *Propheſie*, or Revelation about *other* Things?

Anſw. Yes; they had Revelations of future events, concerning either themſelves, their Friends, or the whole Church. Thus *Agabus* foretold the *Famine*, Acts 11. 28. and St. *Paul's impriſonment at Jeruſalem*, Act. 21. 10, 11. And *Paul* foretold to his *Company in the Ship*, that they ſhould *all be ſaved*, and none of them periſh in the Ship-wrack, *Act.* 27. 22, 23, 24, &c. And St. *John* foretold, not only what was to befall particular Perſons, but the whole Church in ſucceeding Ages, in his Book of the *Revelations*.

Queſt. I remember you ſaid, we are not now to expect any more Revelations in *Religion*, to ſhew us the way to pleaſe God, and go to Heaven. But do you ſuppoſe, that ſome may ſtill be *Prophets*, and have Revelations about other things?

Anſw. Perhaps they may, about *Particular accidents* to particular Perſons, or Families; or about *great Revolutions*, to States, or Empires. As to theſe Matters, it is not for me to ſtint the kindneſs and care of God, or to determine what intimations he may ſometimes vouchſafe from the other World. And if any wiſe, ſober, and good men, by the forcibleneſs of the impreſſion on their minds, after the *Prophetick* way, which convinces and ſatisfies themſelves, and by the correſpondence of events, which may ſatisfie others, find they have any ſuch thing, I ſhall not withſtand them; and ſo long as they do not offer theſe,

theſe, to innovate in Religion, the Revelations of the *Scripture* are no bar againſt them.

Queſt. You have fully explained this firſt miraculous Gift of the *Holy Ghoſt*, the Gift of *inſpirations*. Were there any other miraculous Gifts *ſubſervient* to it, which you would explain to me under this Head?

Anſw. Yes; *Firſt* the Gift of *diſcerning Spirits*, *i. e.* among all the Pretenders to inſpiration, who ſpoke true inſpirations, and who meer pretences of it, or Satanical deluſions. *We have received the Spirit of God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *which reveals to us the Things of God.* And *he that is Spiritual, judgeth all Things*, that are pretended by others; *yet he himſelf is judged of no man*, *i. e.* they who want his Spirit, cannot judge of him. *For who*, *i.e.* of thoſe who want this Spirit, *hath known the mind of the Lord*, to diſcern when another meerly pretends to it? 1 *Cor.* 10. 12, 15, 16. And this Gift of Diſcerning Spirits, was very neceſſary in that Age, to warn the Church againſt Falſe Prophets. For when there was ſuch a commonneſs of true Revelations, it gave the greateſt opportunity to Diabolical Enthuſiaſts, or wicked Impoſtors, to obtrude their inventions, or deluſions upon the Church, hoping they ſhould paſs for inſpirations among the crowd of others. *Now are there many Falſe Phrophets gone out into the World*, ſaith St. *John*, which makes it neceſſary *not to believe every Spirit*, 1 Joh. 4. 1.

Queſt.

Queſt. This Gift indeed, was neceſſary to diſcover them, before the *Scriptures* were written: but when once they had them, could not any Chriſtians thereby detect Impoſtors, without the Gift of diſcerning Spirits?

Anſw. Yes; and ſo St. *John*, and the other *Apoſtles* in their *Epiſtles*, gave ordinary Rules for this purpoſe. One of theſe Rules was, confeſſing *Chriſt* to be come in the Fleſh. *Try the Spirits*, ſays he, *whether they be of God: and hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every Spirit that confeſſeth Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God; and every one that denys it, is not of God*, 1 Joh. 4. 1, 2, 3. and 2 Joh. 7. Another Rule was, their ſubmiſſion to the *Apoſtles*, and Governours of the Church, ſince God would inſpire no man to break Unity, and make needleſs Schiſms. *We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Errour*, 1 Joh. 4. 6. But the moſt comprehenſive Rule of all, was their agreement, or diſſonancy with the Holy *Scriptures*, as I noted before, and the Revelations of the undoubted *Apoſtles*. *If any man think himſelf to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the Things which I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 14.37. But *if any Man, or Angel from Heaven, preach unto you any other Goſpel, than that you have received already, let him be accurſed*, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

Queſt.

Queſt. What other miraculous Gifts, beſides this of *Diſcerning Spirits*, were ſubſervient to this Gift of inſpirations?

Anſw. Secondly, the Gift of *utterance*, *i. e.* of aſſurance, fluency, and volubility of ſpeech, whereby they were enabled to declare, and make known their Revelations to advantage. This St. *Paul* deſired the *Coloſſians*, to beg of God for him; *Praying for us, that God would open to us a Door of utterance, to ſpeak the myſtery of Chriſt, that I may make it manifeſt, as I ought to ſpeak*, Col. 4. 3, 4. Under which is comprehended that miraculous *boldneſs*, which theſe poor men ſhew'd to admiration, in aſſerting undauntedly a moſt exploded Cauſe, in the face of their numerous and potent Adverſaries. *That utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the myſtery of the Goſpel: that therein I may ſpeak boldly, as I ought to ſpeak*, Eph. 6. 19, 20.

Queſt. Was this miraculous *Boldneſs*, a Gift beſtowed upon the *Old Prophets*?

Anſw. Yes; it was a part of that *Spirit of Fortitude* the *Jewiſh* Writers ſpeak of, wherewith God armed a Prophet, before he ſent him with a difficult and perillous Meſſage, in which he might foreſee the greateſt terrour, and dread of men, to ſtop his Mouth. Thus God told *Ezekiel*, when he ſent him to the impudent, and hard-hearted *Iſraelites*. *Behold, I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy*

thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads. As an Adamant, harder than Flint, have I made thy Fore-head: Fear them not, neither be diſmayed at their Looks, though they be a Rebellious Houſe, Ezek. 3. 8, 9. Thus alſo he bid *Jeremiah*, *ſpeak, and not be diſmayed at their Faces; for he had that Day made him a defenced City, an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Walls, againſt the whole Land, againſt the Kings of Judah, the Princes, the Prieſts, and the People thereof*, Jer. 1. 8, 17, 18, 19.

Queſt. And did the *Holy Ghoſt*, give this miraculous *Boldneſs* to the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; in a wonderful meaſure. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake the word of God with Boldneſs*, Act. 4. 31. And *when* the *Jewiſh Rulers ſaw the Boldneſs of Peter and John*, aſſerting freely *the Power and Authority of Jeſus*, and taxing them openly as his wicked *Murderers*, to their very Faces, *they marvelled*, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Queſt. Had they this boldneſs of Spirit at all times?

Anſw. No. For at *Corinth* St. *Paul* ſays of himſelf, that *he was with them in Weakneſs and Fear, and much Trembling*, 1 Cor. 2. 3. In ſome great Dangers, and preſſing Neceſſities, their Natural Fears would return upon them, to trouble them for ſome time. Thus it ſometimes happen'd to St. *Paul*, where he expected the moſt perillous oppoſition: for, after the hardſhips, and hazards he had run through at † *Philippi*,

† *Act.* 16. 12, 22, 23 24.

 and

and at † *Theſſalonica*, expecting the like at *Corinth* too, *he was with them*, as he ſays, *in much trembling*, and ſo diſcouraged, that he needed a *Revelation* to *embolden* him, *Act.* 18. 1, 9, 10. And thus it did eſpecially, if at ſuch time he were alone, and had not his Companions with him. *When he came into Macedonia*, whilſt he was by himſelf, *his Fleſh had no Reſt, but he was troubled on every ſide, without were fightings, and within were fears.* But as ſoon as his Coadjutor *Titus* came to him, he took heart, and *God, who comforteth thoſe who are caſt down, comforted him by the coming of Titus*, 2 Cor. 7. 5, 6. *And when he came to Troas, where a Door was opened to him, he had no Reſt in his Spirit, becauſe he found not Titus his Brother*, as he expected, to ſtand by him, 2 Cor 2. 12, 13. And at *Corinth*, whilſt he was alone, he was the more afraid; but *when Silas and Timotheus were come, he was preſſed in Spirit*, i. e. vigorouſly put forward, and emboldened by their Preſence, *Act.* 18. 5.

† *Act.* 17. 5, 6, 10.

Queſt. By this I ſee the *Apoſtles* were Men, and had ſome Returns of Humane Fears, and Infirmities, and this miraculous boldneſs did not actuate and invigorate them at all times?

Anſw. 'Tis true indeed. But ordinarily they injoy'd it, and particularly at thoſe very inſtants, when they had the greateſt need of it. As St. *Paul did before Nero*, where *the Lord ſtood with him, and ſtrengthned*

ned him, i. e. with a mind undaunted, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17. And as *Peter* and *John* did before the *Sanhedrim*, where they were ſo *bold*, that the *Rulers marvelled*, Act. 4. 6, 7, 8, 10, 13. And as *Chriſt* promiſed they ſhould all do, when they were *brought before Governours, and Kings, for his ſake*. For then, ſays he, *take no thought beforehand, how, or what ye ſhall ſpeak; for it ſhall be given you in that ſame Hour, what you ſhall ſpeak*, i. e. both matter, and Preſence of Mind to utter it, *For it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you*, Mat. 10. 18, 19, 20.

Queſt. What is the *ſecond* of thoſe *Extraordinary Gifts*, which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, for the Planting and eſtabliſhing of *Chriſt's* Church and Religion?

Anſw. The Gift of *Miracles*, which enabled them to prove thoſe things undeniably unto others, which God had revealed to themſelves.

Queſt. Is working a Miracle for any Doctrine, a Proof it comes from God?

Anſw. Yes, if the Doctrine tends to Holineſs, and be worthy of God. For a Miracle, is not the work of Man, but of God, and ſhews that God ſtands on his ſide that works it. So that Miracles are God's Witneſs, and way of proving Things. *The Works that I do in my Father's Name, bear witneſs of me*, Joh. 10. 24, 25. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.*

But

But If I do, though you believe not me, believe the Works, ver. 37, 38. And *God bore the Apoſtles witneſs, with ſigns and wonders, and divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, Heb, 2. 4. and *confirmed the Word with ſigns following*, Mar. 16. 20. The Power of Miracles, is the *Spirits Proof*, or *Demonſtration. My Speech was in Demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power*, 1 Cor. 2. 4.

Queſt. But doth not *Satan* himſelf ſometimes work a Miracle, or ſuch a lying Wonder, as will paſs for a Miracle?

Anſw. Yes, for Doctrines that ſerve his own ends; but never for a Doctrine that plainly oppoſes and overthrows them. For ſo *Satan*, as *Chriſt* argues undeniably, *would be divided againſt Satan, and then how could his Kingdom ſtand*? Mat. 12. 25, 26. If a Doctrine therefore tends to Holineſs, as I ſaid, and is worthy of God, as Chriſtianity doth moſt eminently, a Miracle is a ſure proof of it, and 'tis certain the evil Spirits have no hand in working it. Not to mention thoſe other moſt demonſtrative marks of the Miracles wrought for *Chriſtianity*, whereof I have already diſcourſed in † another Place.

† *Part.* 1. c. 3.

Queſt. In any Miracles then which are propoſed to us, we are to look not only at the works, but alſo at their end, and uſefulneſs?

Anſw. Yes. For if they are for impious, and impure Ends, 'tis plain they come from impious, and unclean Spirits; if only

only for Oſtentation and Praiſe, from vain-glorious and proud ones; if meerly to gratifie idle Curioſity of Spectators, like Feats of Juglers, from Ludicrous and Vain Spirits, who delight to amuſe with Toys and Trifles. All Miracles, being the effect of intelligent Agents, by their Deſign ſhew the Temper and Genius of the Actors. And therefore, when any are pretended to come from God, that muſt be ſhewn in their gravity, grandure, pious heavenly fruits, or important uſefulneſs. But we muſt not put his Hand to any that ſerve only to vicious ends, or ridiculous impertinence.

Queſt. And as God works them only for important and needful ends, Doth he not alſo only on needful occaſions?

Anſw. Very right; either of ſuccouring his Servants, or Crediting his Meſſengers, eſpecially when he ſends them out at firſt to promulge a Law, or ſometimes, though in this more ſeldom, when he ſends them to revive it after ſome great and general Defection from it; and accordingly, the moſt Miracles that were wrought all the time of the *Jewiſh State*, were either by *Moſes*, who firſt publiſhed the Law, or by *Elias* and *Eliſha* to reſtore it, after *Jeroboam*'s *Calves* had made *ten Tribes* of *twelve*, moſt groſly to ſwerve from it. And therefore it is a vain thing, for any of thoſe to liſten after new Miracles, who pretend to Rule their Faith by the Holy *Scriptures*, which

which ſtand atteſted by all the old ones, as if there were ſome Defects in the Miracles of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, which need to be ſupplied by their Followers. But 'tis more eſpecially vain to pretend, as the Church of *Rome* doth, to work ſuch Miracles only among themſelves, who believe without them, but never before us, who have more need to be convinced by them. *Moſes*, and our *Saviour Chriſt*, and his *bleſſed Apoſtles*, ſhewed their Miracles among thoſe they deſign'd to make *Converts*, or ſuch young and unſetled Followers, as needed to be confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the Faith. And in Teſtimony to *the Man of God*, Jeroboam's hand is miraculouſly *withered*, and as miraculouſly *reſtored before the Altar at Bethel*, the very Seat of the Schiſmaticks, 1 *King.* 13. 4, 5, 6. And if *Tongues* are uſed *for a ſign*, 'tis not to thoſe, ſaith St. *Paul*, *who believe*, *but to thoſe who believe not*, 1 Cor. 14. 22. To ſhew ſigns where they are not needed, and withhold them where they are more needful, is not the way and method of his Almighty Power, who is neither wanting in neceſſaries, nor Liberal in ſuperfluities.

Queſt. Was this Gift of Miracles beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; *God bore them witneſs*, *with Signs*, *and Wonders*, *and divers Miracles*, Heb. 2. 4. and *confirmed the word with Signs following*, Mar. 16. 20.

Queſt. What Miracles had they the Gift of?

Anſw. They had *the Gift of Healing*, without the help of Medicine. *To one is given, by the Spirit, the Gift of healing*, 1 Cor. 12. 9. And thus by the *Holy Ghoſt*, *Peter* and *John healed the Lame Man*, Act. 3. 2, 6. In working theſe Cures, when our Saviour ſent them out at *Firſt*, they uſed the Ceremony of *anointing with Oyl*. *They anointed with Oyl many that were ſick, and healed them*, Mar. 6. 13. And this Ceremony of *anointing*, was held on afterwards, whilſt this miraculous *Gift of Healing* laſted, and *Prayer* was added to it. *Is any Sick among you*, ſays St. *James*, *let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them Pray over him, anointing him with Oyl in the Name of the Lord*, for in *Chriſt's* Name all their Miracles were wrought: *And the Prayer of Faith*, i. e. put up in Faith of the miraculous cure, *ſhall ſave the ſick*, viz. from his Diſeaſe, *and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up*; *and if he have committed Sins*, i. e. if any Sins brought this ſickneſs, *they ſhall be forgiven him* in the cure of it, *Jam.* 5. 14, 15.

Queſt. By *ſaving of the Sick*, here, indeed, may ſeem to be meant ſaving of him from his Diſeaſe; becauſe it follows; *and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up*. But *the Prayer of Faith*, and *forgiveneſs of Sins*, ſeem to note ſomething elſe?

Anſw. As for *the Prayer of Faith*, that Agrees very well: for a Faith, or belief that

that God will enable him to do it, is neceſſary in every one that works a Miracle. And as for the *Forgiving of his Sins*; you muſt know, that the Puniſhment of Sin, is not only eternal Death, but Preſent Diſeaſes: and therefore that the ſin is forgiven, at leaſt in part, when either of theſe is taken off. And thus the *Scripture* ſpeaks of it. For when any ſickneſs, or infirmities, come for ſin, our Saviour makes it the ſame thing to ſay, *thy ſins are forgiven*, as to ſay, *ariſe and walk*: and accordingly, when he deſign'd to work a Cure, he would ſay, *thy ſins are pardoned*, Mat. 9. 2, 5.

Queſt. What other Miracles, had they the gift of?

Anſw. Of *caſting out Devils*, as the *Apoſtles* did *out of Multitudes*, Act. 5. 16. Of *Raiſing the Dead*, as *Peter* raiſed *Dorcas*, Act. 9. 39, 40. and *Paul*, *Eutichus*, Act. 20. 9, 10, 12. *Of inflicting Bodily Diſeaſes, and Torments*, as well as *Spiritual Horrors*, and *Supernatural Agonies, on contumacious ſinners*, as *Paul* did on *Elymas the Sorcerer, ſtriking him with blindneſs*, Act. 13. 8, 9, 11. and on the *inceſtuous Corinthian*, whom he thus puniſhed *for the deſtruction of the Fleſh*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. Which Corporal inflictions, he ſeems plainly to threaten the Back-ſliders at *Corinth* withal, when he tells them of *coming to them with a Rod*, 1 Cor. 4. 21. Of *uſing ſharpneſs*, 2 Cor. 13. 10. Of *Revenging all Diſobedience*, 2 Cor. 10. 6. Yea, of ſuch ſharpneſs, as would over-awe, and

humble the moſt carnal minds, and contemptuous Oppoſers of Church Authority and Cenſures: *bringing down the Fleſh*, as he ſaid of the *Inceſtuous Perſons*, and making them *afraid to Blaſpheme*, as he ſaid of Hymeneus *and* Alexander, *who were moſt contemptuous and ſtubborn in their Heretical Opinion*, 1 Tim. 19. 20. And this infliction of ſmart, and Bodily Diſeaſes, upon obſtinate Sinners, is called *Delivering over unto Satan*, as the *Apoſtle* ſays he had done in theſe laſt mentioned Caſes.

Queſt. Why was this infliction of Bodily ſmart and puniſhment upon them, called *Delivering over to Satan?*

Anſw. Becauſe theſe Pains were to be the Effect of God's immediate Juſtice, and *Satan* ſhould be the Tormentor, and Executioner of God's Vengeance: And therefore, when theſe Offenders were given up to God's Juſtice, they were ſaid to be delivered into his Hands. When God in a more immediate, and extraordinary way, ſends preſent heavy Plagues upon Men, eſpecially as a Puniſhment for ſin, *Satan* is often ſaid to inflict them. *Saul's Melancholly*, is called *an Evil Spirit from the Lord* upon him, 1 *Sam.* 18. 10. God's *Plagueing the Egyptians*, *ſending evil Angels among them*, Pſ. 78. 49. *The Woman*, who had *been bowed together eighteen years*, *one whom Satan had bound*, Luk. 13. 11, 16. The *Lunatick*, a *Demoniack*, or *one vexed with an unclean Spirit*, Mat. 17. 15, 18. and Luk. 9. 39, 42.

And

And thus, when the *Apoſtles* gave up offenders to God to puniſh them, becauſe the Devil executes the Puniſhment which God decrees, it is called *Delivering them over unto Satan.*

Queſt. This delivering to *Satan* then was an Act of Divine Juſtice upon theſe Criminals; and God commanded *Satan* thus to afflict them, as formerly he afflicted *Job*, at the inſtance of the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; and therefore, as 'tis not improbable, it was done with *Prayer* to God to take vengeance. For ſo the *Apoſtle* may ſeem to expreſs himſelf, on his Delivering up *Alexander*. *Alexander the Copper-Smith did me much Evil, the Lord reward him according to his Works*, 2 Tim. 4. 14. In this he Acted as a Spiritual Judge, delivering up to Juſtice, and Prayed God to exact the Penalty according to his Sentence.

Queſt. Had they the Gift of any other Miracles?

Anſw. Yes; for ſuch I reckon was their *Joy in Tribulations*, and Glorying even in the very Hour of their ſufferings. When the *Council had beaten them, they departed from their Preſence, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt's Name*, Acts 5. 40, 41. Whilſt their Stripes were yet ſore, and they were pinched *in the Stocks*, in the Dark Dungeon, *Paul and Silas ſang Praiſes to God*, and triumphed

rejoycing, *Act.* 16. 23, 24, 25. And upon *their Perſecution at Antioch, the Diſciples were filled with Joy, and with the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 13. 50, 52. Thus, as if they were not of the ſame Mold, nor had Bodies like other Men, did they Glory in their Shame for *Chriſt*, and rejoice in Tribulation.

Queſt. But is not *Joy* an *ordinary* Fruit of the *Spirit*? And why then do you think this rejoicing of theirs, had ſomething Miraculous in it?

Anſw. A ſecret Joy in the ſenſe of God's Love, is common among Good Men, and an ordinary *Fruit of the Spirit*, and ſo 'tis reckon'd, *Gal.* 5. 22. Yea, and Joy in Tribulation, after the Tribulation is paſt; for *afterwards it yields the Peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs, to thoſe that are exerciſed with it*, Heb. 12. 11. But to rejoice in the very midſt of it, and under the Stroke, as they did, I think has an extraordinary Gift, and miraculous Aid in it: For under the ordinary Aſſiſtance of the Spirit, the Bodily Pain hinders rejoycing at the very inſtant. *For the Preſent, no chaſtening ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous*, Heb. 12. 11.

Queſt. What ſay you then to the Words of *Chriſt*, *Rejoice and be exceeding glad, when you are Perſecuted for my ſake*, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

Anſw. I think they do not ſo much expreſs a Duty, that he ſtrictly exacts, as a Gift and Priviledge, which he ſometimes beſtows upon his *Martyrs* and Confeſſors:

feſſors: As was viſible in the *Apoſtles* days, and among the *Primitive Martyrs*. For their minds were ſometimes ſo raviſhed, and tranſported, with Spiritual Conſolations, as to ſeize all the Powers of their Souls, and not ſuffer them to attend to the moſt Exquiſite Bodily Tortures. So as they could ſmile upon Racks, and ſing under their Executioners, and be ſo far intranced in Spiritual Comforts, as to declare under the moſt Bloody Butcheries, that they were not ſenſible of any Pain. And the ſame ſtupendious ſupports, God has ſometimes vouchſafed in later, and modern Perſecutions.

Queſt. I ſee the *Holy Ghoſt* endowed the *Apoſtles*, with ſtrange Gifts of Miracles. But could they work theſe Miracles, at any inſtant of time when they would; or were ſome Preparations required to them?

Anſw. There was required to them, 1. Always *Faith in him that wrought* them. And 2. ſometimes, particularly in miraculous Cures, *Faith in the Perſon that received* them, or whom they were wrought upon.

Queſt. What was the *Faith* required in him that wrought them?

Anſw. A Perſwaſion that God's Power would aſſiſt him, and perform the Miracle by him. For that they might never offer at this in vain, which would have expoſed both themſelves, and their Religion, whenſoever God would enable them

to work a Miracle, he firſt poſſeſſed their minds with a firm Belief and Aſſurance of it. And this is the *Faith*, ſo oft required of *Wonder-workers* in the *Scriptures*. *Though I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains*, 1 Cor. 13. 2. And, *if ye have Faith as a Grain of Muſtard-Seed, ye ſhall ſay to this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder Place, and it ſhall Remove, and nothing ſhall be unpoſſible unto you*, Mat. 17. 20. And this Faith is reckon'd as one of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. *To another Faith, by the ſame Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 9.

Queſt. What was the *Faith* that ſometimes, but more eſpecially in the *cure of Diſeaſes*, was required of him that received a Miracle, or the Perſon it was to be wrought upon?

Anſw. A Perſwaſion that God would enable the Wonder-worker to do the cure for, or ſhew the Miracle upon him. This alſo was another Requiſite. For *Paul ſtedfaſtly beholding the Creeple, and perceiving he had faith to be healed*, ſaid to him, *ſtand upright*, Act. 14. 9, 10. *Believe ye that I am able to do this*, ſaid *Chriſt to the blind Men? according to your Faith, ſo be it unto you*, Mat. 9. 28, 29. *If thou canſt do any thing*, ſaid the *Father of the Demoniack, have Compaſſion on us, and help us. Jeſus ſaid unto him, if thou canſt believe* I can, *all* miraculous *Things are poſſible* to be done *to him that believeth*, Mar. 9. 22, 23. And *in his own Country*, 'tis ſaid, *Chriſt did not many Miracles*,

Miracles, becauſe of their unbelief, Mat. 13. 58. or, as St. *Mark*, *he could not do them*, God, it ſeems, ſuſpending this miraculous aid, in the caſe of ſuch, whoſe unbelief rendred them unworthy of it, *Mark* 6. 4, 5.

Queſt. What is the *third*, and laſt of thoſe *extraordinary Gifts* which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the Apoſtles?

Anſw. The Gift of *ſtrange Tongues*, whereby they, who were all *Jews*, were able in an inſtant to Publiſh that Religion God had revealed to them, over all the world, and be underſtood by men of every Language.

Queſt. Was this given to the *Apoſtles?*

Anſw. Yes; viſibly at *the day of Pentecoſt*, when *the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon each of them, in the ſhape of Cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and they ſpake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*, and *talked to Parthians*, and *Romans*, *Cretes*, and *Arabians*, and to *the devout men from every Nation under Heaven at that time* gathered together to *Jeruſalem*, to *every man in the Tongue wherein he was born*, Acts 2. 1. to 12. And at the *impoſition of the Apoſtles hands*, it was generally beſtowed on others afterwards. As on *the Diſciples at Epheſus*, *at the impoſition of Paul's hands*, Acts 19. 2, 6. on *Cornelius*, and his *Gentile Friends*, at *Peter's Preaching*; for *while he yet ſpake to them, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the word, and they ſpake with Tongues, and magnified God*, Acts 10. 44, 45, 46. And ſo on others in great numbers,

numbers, particularly in the *Church of Corinth.*

Queſt. To what end were they thus endowed with all Languages?

Anſw. To enable them to Preach to all Nations, for they were Commiſſion'd to *teach all Nations*, Mat. 28. 19. And they could not teach them, without ſpeaking to every man in his own Language. And therefore whereſoever they came, the Spirit immediately made them as perfect in the Language of the Place, as they were in their own Mother Tongue.

Queſt. Had not ſome the Gift of *Tongues*, who were not ſent out to men of another Language?

Anſw. Yes; as particularly in the Church of *Corinth*, for there many would ſpeak in the *Aſſemblies*, where all, or moſt were *Greeks*, in *Strange Tongues*; which, becauſe *the Church did not underſtand*, St. *Paul* directs ſuch gifted Linguiſts, to *Pray* for another Gift of *interpreting Tongues*, to make ſuch enthuſiaſms intelligible to their Hearers, 1 *Cor.* 14. 2, 5, 13. In theſe *ſtrange Tongues* they *Preached*, v. 6. and *Prayed to God*, v. 14. And this, being an offering up both inſpired Prayers, and in inſpired Tongues, which are both his extraordinary Gifts, is called *Praying*, and *Singing*, *by*, or *with the Spirit*, v. 14, 15.

Queſt. To what end then ſerved theſe ſtrange Tongues, in ſuch Churches all of one Tongue?

* *Anſw.*

Anſw. Not to make known Religion indeed, becauſe the hearers did not underſtand them. But they ſerv'd to expreſs the Speakers Devotion, and ſo *edified himſelf*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and as a *Sign*, to confirm our Religion, and ſo were an argument, as all other Miracles were, to prove it true to *Infidels*. *Tongues are for a ſign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not*, v. 22.

Queſt. Was there any Gift ſubſervient to this, of ſpeaking with ſtrange Tongues?

Anſw. Yes; the Gift of *interpreting thoſe ſtrange Tongues*, when ſpoken either by themſelves, or others.

Queſt. But I pray you what need of that? did not they that ſpoke theſe ſtrange Tongues underſtand themſelves?

Anſw. Yes; *he that ſpoke in an unknown Tongue, edified himſelf*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and *he that gave Thanks in it, gave Thanks well*, as St. *Paul* ſays, v. 17. But in this exerciſe of ſtrange Tongues, the heat of Enthuſiaſm and Divine Rapture, was ſometimes ſo great, that the Speaker could not interpret himſelf as he ſpoke, nor remember it after that heat was over, ſo as to give an explication to thoſe that heard it. And this defect, the Gift of *interpreting Tongues* ſupplyed; which Gift, St. *Paul* directs thoſe who had the other of ſpeaking with ſtrange Tongues, to beg of God, in order to their greater *uſefulneſs*. *Let him that ſpeaketh in an unknown Tongue, pray alſo that he*

he may interpret, *i. e.* do it with ſuch conſiſtency, and moderation of mind, as to be able afterwards to give the ſame, in other more intelligible words, *v.* 13. and orders, that when any ſpoke with Tongues, who were not thus qualified to explain themſelves, they ſhould ſpeak, not all at a time, as they ſometimes did, but *by courſe*, *and* have *one* ſtill to ſecond them, *to interpret* their ſtrange ſpeech, v. 27.

Queſt. By this I ſee what are the extraordinary *Gifts*, which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, *viz.* the Gift of *inſpiration*, whereby they ſhould be infallibly inſtructed in their Religion; of *Tongues*, and *utterance*, whereby they ſhould intelligibly, and undauntedly expreſs and declare it; and of *Miracles*, whereby they ſhould undoubtedly prove and demonſtrate it to all the World.

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. When *Chriſt* promiſed the *Holy Ghoſt* to his *Apoſtles*, he calls him by the Name of *Comforter*, Joh. 16. 7. What is meant by that?

Anſw. Firſt, that he ſhould be an *Advocate*, which is one ſence of the word *Paraclete*, to plead the Cauſe of *Chriſt* and his Religion, againſt all that oppoſed them. This he did moſt convincingly, in the miraculous Gifts already mentioned. And in this ſence, *Chriſt* ſays of him, that *when he is come, he will reprove*, or convince *the world of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment*, Joh. 16. 8.

* *Secondly*,

Secondly, a *Comforter*, which is another ſence of it, to ſupport them under all that troubled them. This is plainly another ſence, ſince he tells them of *ſending the Comforter*, becauſe *ſorrow had filled their hearts*, v. 6. And this Office he fulfill'd, by aſſuring them their Lord, whoſe death they lamented, was now alive again; by ſupplying his Place, in making their defence, and giving them aſſiſtance and direction; and by ſhewing them an happy end of all their Troubles, and preparing them for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Queſt. Is the *unpardonable Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, a Sin againſt theſe miraculous Gifts of his?

Anſw. Yes; for it was againſt the Gift of Miracles, and *caſting out Devils*, the *Phariſees* ſin'd, when he cautions them againſt this dreadful ſin, ſaying, *the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall never be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 24, 32.

Queſt. And what is the unpardonable ſin againſt them?

Anſw. Slandering, or Blaſpheming them, as the *Phariſees* there did, when they attributed them to *Magick*, and *ſaid*, *he caſt out Devils by Beelzebub*, v. 24. for it is expreſly called *ſpeaking againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 32. and *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 31. *And this he ſaid*, ſaith *St. Mark*, *becauſe they ſaid he hath an unclean Spirit*, Mar. 3. 30.

Queſt. What is meant, by *never forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come?*

Anſw.

Anſw. Not being pardonable under any diſpenſation or Religion, either *Jewiſh*, or *Chriſtian*, for the *Jews* looked on the *days of Meſſiah*, as a *later ſtate* and diſpenſation of the Church, to ſucceed their own: on which account, it is called *the laſt days*, Iſ. 2. 2. & Heb. 1. 2. and *the laſt time*, 1 Joh. 2. 18. and the *World to come*, Heb. 6. 5. And † ſome ſins were to be atoneable among *Chriſtians*, for which there was no atonement among the *Jews*, ſince by *Chriſt they were to be juſtified from thoſe Things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 39. And therefore when *Chriſt* ſays, this Blaſphemy *ſhall not be forgiven in this World, nor the World to come*, that is the ſame, as neither to be forgiven in the *Jewiſh* State while it laſted, nor the *Chriſtian*; neither *Moſes*, nor *He*, having provided any Sacrifice or expiation for it.

† *See Part 1. Ch. 2.*

Queſt. Is Blaſpheming God the *Father*, or the *Son* unpardonable?

Anſw. No; *whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of man, it ſhall be forgiven him*, Mat. 12. 32. yea, *all manner of other Sin, and Blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto Men*, v. 31.

Queſt. Why then will the Blaſphemy againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* never be forgiven? Is he more worthy than either the *Father*, or the *Son*?

Anſw. No; that is not the reaſon. But theſe his Gifts, are the laſt means of begetting Belief in men; and without *Faith*, and

and *Repentance* wrought by *Faith*, there is no Pardon. If men would not believe, but revile the *Son*, when he was among them; after he was taken up, the *Holy Ghoſt* was to come, and be his *Advocate*, and, by all the miraculous Gifts I have mentioned, gain credit from them. But if, inſtead of believing him, they ſhall go to *Blaſpheme* and Revile him, and ſlanderouſly call all his ſtupendious Gifts magical Tricks, and works of *Satan*; God is reſolved to endeavour no more with them, nor ever to bring them to Believe, and Repent, without which there is no Pardon. So that it is unpardonable, becauſe after it, God has decreed that Faith, and Repentance, ſhall be impoſſible. Of *Apoſtates*, ſays St. *Paul*, who committed this ſin, *it is impoſſible to renew them again to Repentance*, Heb. 6. 6.

Queſt. Theſe miraculous Gifts were wonderful vouchſafements: did not they evidence all that enjoy'd them, to be in Favour with God, and in a *juſtified ſtate*?

Anſw No; for they were beſtowed promiſcuouſly, on good and bad. *Balaam loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs*; yet he was a *Prophet*, 2. Pet. 2. 15, 16. *Judas* was *the Son of Perdition*; but he *wrought Miracles*, as well as the *other Apoſtles*, Mat. 10. 1, 4, 5, 8. And *at the laſt Day*, *many will plead*, that *in Chriſt's Name they Propheſied, and caſt out Devils, and did Wonders*: and yet he will bid them *depart from him*, becauſe they *wrought iniquity*, Mat. 7. 22, 23. 'Tis obedience, not miracles,

miracles, that will ſave our Souls, it being not the *workers of wonders*, but *workers of Righteouſneſs*, that God accepts of. And thereupon our Saviour *bid his Diſciples rejoyce*, not for *that the Devils were ſubject to them*, *but rather becauſe their Names were written in Heaven*, Luk. 10. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Queſt. Thus much may ſuffice, for the underſtanding of the *extraordinary Gifts* of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

But beſides his beſtowing theſe *Gifts*, you ſaid he has appointed ſeveral *Offices*, *for the Planting*, *and Eſtabliſhing Chriſt's Church and Religion*, what are thoſe *Offices*, which he is the Authour of?

Anſw. *He gave ſome Apoſtles*, the higheſt, and moſt extenſive power in the *Church*; *and ſome Prophets*, who foretold future Things, Expounded old, and utter'd new Propheſies; *and ſome Evangeliſts*, who writ the Goſpels, or preach'd the Word in unconverted Places, where it was never heard before; *and ſome Paſtors and Teachers*, or Biſhops and Presbyters, to govern and inſtruct the Church: All which he gave *for the perfecting of the Saints*, *the Work of the Miniſtry*, *and the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12. And *God hath ſet in the Church*, *firſt Apoſtles*, *ſecondarily Prophets*, *thirdly Teachers*, *after that Miracles*, *Governments*, *&c.* 1 Cor. 12. 28.

Queſt. For what end were theſe Offices appointed?

Anſw. For the *Government* and *Edification* of

of the Church, and the *Work of the Miniſtry*, in the Word, and Sacraments, and Prayers. They were given, ſaith St. *Paul*, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, and for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 12.

Queſt. And were all theſe Offices to laſt through all Ages of the Church?

Anſw. No; *Apoſtles*, *Evangeliſts*, and *Prophets* were *Temporary* Offices, which lay in founding of the Church, and revealing *Chriſt*'s Religion by Inſpiration from himſelf. And this Church being once founded and built, and this Revelation being once committed to Writing, it remains a laſting Thing, and ſo needs not to be repeated a ſecond time. And therefore, when once they had perform'd this Work, in all after Ages there was no further need of them: But as for *Paſtors* and *Teachers*, to govern the Church, and ordain Succeſſors, and to miniſter the Word, and Prayers, and Sacraments, they will be equally wanted in every Age, and therefore the *Holy Ghoſt* has appointed them to continue always. *Go, Baptiſe all Nations, teaching them to obſerve all my Commandments. And lo!* in ſuch Teaching and Baptiſing, *I am with you always, even to the end of the World*, Mat. 28. 19, 20. And tho, as I ſay, ſome of the Offices mentioned by St. *Paul* were neceſſary only in the firſt Age; yet others, which are equally neceſſary to the *edifying of the Church*, and *the Work of the Miniſtry*, in

every Age, are to continue, as he ſays, *till we all, i. e.* all Chriſtians that are, and all that ſhall be, *come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt.* So that the Church is to enjoy the Benefit of them to the Worlds end, *Eph.* 4. 12, 13.

Queſt. Since all that are at any time in theſe Offices die in one Age, how are they to be continued in the next?

Anſw. The *Biſhops* or *Governours* are ſtill to Ordain others, to remedy their own Mortality, and ſupply the Neceſſities of the Church, through all Times. Thus *Chriſt* told his *Apoſtles*, *As my Father ſent me*, viz. with a Power of Commiſſioning you to ſucceed in this Miniſtry when I am gone; *ſo ſend I you*, i. e. with Power of Ordaining others, in like manner of Succeſſion, *John* 20. 21. Purſuant to this, they Ordained *Biſhops* in all Churches, as St. *Paul* did *Titus* at *Crete*, and *Timothy* at *Epheſus*. And theſe, in a conſtant Succeſſion, were to Ordain others; as *Paul* bid *Timothy* give Commiſſions, as he had been Commiſſion'd himſelf, or *commit what he had heard of him, to faithful Men, who ſhould be able to teach others alſo*, 2 Tim. 1. 14. and 2. 2. And with theſe, in their Work of the Miniſtry, God would be preſent and aſſiſtant in all after Times, as he had been with the *Apoſtles* in the *Firſt* Age. In thus *Preaching* and *Baptizing*, *lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the World*,

World, Mat. 28. 20. *With you*, that is, with your ſelves during your own Lives, and your Succeſſors in all after times; which is the only way that in this Work he could be with them to the Worlds end, who were all to die in that Age.

Queſt. Is the *Holy Ghoſt* the Author of theſe Offices?

Anſw. Yes. *God hath ſet* theſe Officers *in the Church*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. and *Chriſt gave them* as a *Gift*, *after he was aſcended*, Eph. 4. 8, 11. That is, *God* gave them, and *Chriſt* gave them, by the *Holy Ghoſt*, who now, ſince *Chriſt* is gone to the *Right-hand of God*, is come down to his Church as his † *Subſtitute*, from whom both the Authority and Ability of all theſe Officers is derived. *Feed the Flock*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers*, Acts 20. 28. And when *Chriſt* ordain'd his *Apoſtles*, giving them Power to *ſend others*, as *the Father gave him*, and to *remit* and *retain Sins*, *he breathed on them*, *and ſaid*, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23. And accordingly, to ſhew from whom theſe Powers are derived, in Ordinations of theſe Officers, whether *Biſhops* or *Prieſts*, the Power is to this day conferr'd by ſaying, *Receive thou the Holy Ghoſt*.

† *Jo.* 16. 7. *and* c. 14. 16, 18.

Queſt. What ſhall we think then of thoſe who reject the *Miniſtry*, and caſt off all *Church-Officers* and *Ordinances*, and yet pretend in all this to be guided by the *Spirit?*

Anſw. You may be ſure it is not by that Spirit which *Chriſt* ſent down upon the *Apoſtles*, and which indited the holy *Scriptures*. For that Spirit gave theſe Offices, as the moſt neceſſary and greateſt Bleſſing to the Church: Whereas this Spirit of theirs, plucks up what he planted, and endeavours to aboliſh and overthrow them.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, I perceive how infinitely we are obliged to the *Holy Ghoſt*, for that care he has taken, in Planting and Propagating *Chriſt*'s Church and Religion, both in the *miraculous Gifts* he beſtowed upon his Church ſo amply in the *Firſt Age*, and in the *Offices* and *Governments* he has appointed to Feed and Rule it in all ſucceeding Ages.

But beſides theſe *extraordinary* Gifts, beſtowed only on ſome, for the Propagation and Eſtabliſhment of *Chriſt*'s Church and Religion, you mention'd another ſort of Gifts for the effecting this Great Work of our Salvation, which the *Holy Ghoſt beſtows ordinarily, on Perſons of all Times and Places.* What Gifts are thoſe?

Anſw. All the *inward Graces* and *vertuous Endowments*, which are neceſſary to the Salvation of all particular Perſons, ſuch as the *Apoſtle* reckons up, Gal. 5. *The Fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance, and ſuch like*, v. 22, 23. Particularly, he excites *Devotion*, and helps to raiſe in us holy Deſires, and Life and Quickneſs

neſs in our Prayers. There, ſays the *Apoſtle, the Spirit helps our Infirmities, making Interceſſion for the Saints, according to the Will of God,* by inſpiring them *with ſuch* Deſires and *Groanings as cannot be uttered,* Rom. 8. 26, 27.

Queſt. Is the *Holy Ghoſt* the Author of all theſe inward Graces in us, and can we not have them without his Gift?

Anſw. No; for *the Renewing of our Nature* is aſcribed *to the Holy Ghoſt,* Tit. 3. 5. And St. *Paul* calls all the recited Virtues, *Fruits of the Spirit,* Gal. 5. 22. And *no Man can come to me,* ſaith *Chriſt, i. e.* believe on me, and obey me, *except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him,* John 6. 44. All our Graces come from God, and muſt be ſought of him. And becauſe we are daily in want of them, we are taught by our Lord himſelf to pray, *Hallowed be thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, Deliver us from Evil, &c.* as conſtantly as we ſay, *Give us this Day our Daily Bread.*

Queſt. If the Holy Spirit gives theſe, then any Man, that has them, may know he has Grace, and that the *Holy Ghoſt* dwells and acts in him?

Anſw. Yes; if he is affected and influenc'd not only by ſome few, but by all of them. For they are the Fruits of the Spirit, as I noted; and where we ſee the genuine Fruit, we may make ſure of the Principle that gives Birth to it; as our Saviour ſaid, *the Tree is known by its Fruit,* Luke 6.

43, 44. Mat. 7. 16, 20. And accordingly, they are given as Marks of Grace, and a ſure Proof that Men belong to God, in the *Scriptures*. *Hereby know we that we know him, and that we are in him, if we keep his Commandments*, 1 John 2. 3, 5. *We know that we have paſſed from Death unto Life, becauſe we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. *He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous; in this the Children of God are manifeſt*, 1 John 3. 7, 10.

Queſt. But may not an ill Man have ſome Good in him? And have not ſeveral practiſed ſome Virtues, who yet were void of the *Spirit*, and *ſaving Grace?*

Anſw. Yes: For *Herod*, an ill Man, *heard John Baptiſt gladly, and did many things*, Mark 6. 20. And *the Fooliſh Virgins* kept pace in ſome Points with *the Wiſe*, Mat. 25. 1, 2 Either that general Grace, which is common to all Perſons, or their particular Inclination, or Intereſt, or Natural Conſcience, can carry on Men, who are Enemies to God in the main, to the Performance of ſome Duties. And therefore I ſaid theſe Vertues are a Sign of the Spirit, and of Saving Grace, not when ſome few or more of them meet by chance in an otherwiſe evil Man; but only in thoſe who have a general Care, and Conſcientious Regard to all of them.

Queſt. You have ſhewn how theſe Graces are the Fruits of the Spirit, and the Gift of God. But ſince God's Spirit is thus to work

work them in us, may we not leave God's Work to himſelf, and think our ſelves free from any Care or Pains about them?

Anſw. No, by no means: For he that made us Men, will not alſo make us Saints, without our ſelves. He created us by himſelf alone, but will renew and ſave us only through our Concurrence with him.

Queſt. In carrying on this Work of God, what muſt we do towards it?

Anſw. Our *Heart* and *Will* muſt go along with it, and our *Care* and *Endeavour* too.

Queſt. When God's Spirit begins any Grace or Vertue in us, muſt our Heart go along with it, and are we readily to embrace and make choice of it?

Anſw. Yes; for he will not force an unwilling Mind into Goodneſs. And therefore our own Wills are call'd upon, when we are preſs'd to become Good. *I have ſet before you Life and Good, Death and Evil: Chuſe Life*, Deut. 30. 15, 19. And when we obey ſuch Calls, ſome good Tempers of our Wills are noted as the Cauſe of it. *The Word*, and Grace accompanying it, *brought forth Fruit*, becauſe it wat *received in an honeſt and good Heart*, Luke 8. 15. And if we refuſe them, and continue Bad, our own Wills ſtill are charged with it. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life*, Joh. 5. 40. and, *Why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?* Ezek. 18. 31, 32.

Queſt. And when our Heart is thus bent upon any Graces and Good Things, muſt

our Care and Endeavour alſo be put forth in attainment of them?

Anſw. Yes; for God gives theſe Graces as a Bleſſing upon our own Care and Pains, and works them in us, when we work with him: So that they are to be the Fruit of our Induſtry, as well as of his Bounty. God calls to us, *Make you clean*, Iſa. 1. 16. *Turn your ſelves*, Ezek. 18. 30, 32. as well as we pray to him, *Turn thou us*, Jer. 31. 18. and, *Give us clean Hearts*, Pſal. 51. 10.

Queſt. But is not God before-hand with us, and gives us ſome Grace, before we endeavour any thing? *I was found of them that ſought me not*, ſaith the *Prophet*, Iſa. 65. 1.

Anſw. Yes; the Grace of *outward Revelations* and *Opportunities*. Theſe prevent our Care, and are given before we ask them. In this Kingdom, for Inſtance, we have the Light of the Holy Scriptures, the Guidance and Care of Paſtors, the Benefit of Publick Aſſemblies, and the Protection of Laws for Chriſtianity, which is not ſo in *Heathen* Countries. And we have the *Scriptures* in our own Language, and Purity of Doctrine, and a truly Primitive, Edifying way of Worſhip, which is not ſo in many Chriſtian Nations. And all theſe, with other Advantages, came to us unasked; we did not ſeek them, but were born to them. And of theſe *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, who is not treating of inward Aſſiſtances, but of outward Revelations, which God would make to the *Gentiles*,

Gentiles, who made *no inquiry after them*, but had the Revelations brought to them. For the *Heathen* World did not ſeek out to the *Apoſtles*, but the *Apoſtles* ſought them.

Queſt. And doth not he prevent us too, with *good Deſires*, and *inward Motions?*

Anſw. Yes, he doth, with the *Firſt* Motions and Beginnings of his Grace. But as for the Ripening of theſe, and our growing up to a Maſtery over our Luſts, and a Saving Pitch; that requires our own Care and Endeavours, which theſe Firſt Stirrings of Grace muſt awaken in us. And when we do ſo endeavour after them, God will ſtill give more Grace, and, by his Spirit, effect in us ſuch Virtues as we labour after; but he will withdraw what he has already given, if we are idle, and labour not at all. For concerning this Improvement of God's Grace, by our own Care and Pains, our Saviour ſays, *To him that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance: but from him that hath not*, i. e. hath not improved what God beſtowed, *ſhall be taken away even what he hath*, Mat. 25. 29.

Queſt. God's Giving then is only an Encouragement for our Seeking; ſince he gives thoſe Graces, as he gives our Food and Maintenance, not to idle, careleſs Men, but only to ſuch as diligently and wiſely labour after them?

Anſw. Very true; aud therefore we are preſs'd to work them out our ſelves, by that

that very Reaſon *work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will, and to do,* Phil. 2. 12, 13.

Queſt. What way ſhould we ſeek theſe Graces of the Spirit, that by God's Bleſſing we may attain them?

Anſw. Firſt, Pray for them. *If any man lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men Liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him,* Jam. 1. 5. And *God will give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him,* Luk. 11. 13.

Queſt. And muſt we pray *in Faith*, that is, ask with an expectation to Receive them?

Anſw. Yes; for God cannot bear to ſee us queſtion his kindneſs, or diſtruſt his Promiſe. Our diſtruſt is enough to make him deny us any thing; but we are ſure to receive the Graces he has promiſed, if we dare confide in him. *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask, Believing, you ſhall receive,* Mat. 21. 22. And *if any man lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering,* Jam. 1. 5, 6.

Queſt. What other ways of ſeeking theſe Graces, would you direct to?

Anſw. Secondly, a frequent, and ſerious uſe of the *Holy Sacrament.* That is no unfruitful Ordinance, but conveys Spiritual ſtrength into our Souls, as *Bread* doth to our Bodies. This the Scripture intimates, when *Chriſt's Euchariſtical Body* is called *Bread,* Joh. 6. 51, 55. And when the *eating*

Bread, and *drinking Wine*, is called *the Communion of his Body and Blood*, that is, the Communication of all thoſe Graces, and Benefits to us, which were purchaſed by them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16.

Queſt. Have you any other Rules?

Anſw. Yes. *Thirdly*, with Prayers, and Sacraments we muſt joyn a Diligent uſe of *wiſe* and *likely means* of attaining the Deſired Graces. When we ſeek to God for Daily Bread and maintenance, it muſt be in following our Callings, with Prudent Care, and Diligence. And in like ſort, when we ſeek to him for any Virtues, it muſt be in the uſe of ſuch Probable, and Diſcreet ways, as are like to make us Maſters of them.

Queſt. Would you add any thing further, about the uſe of theſe means?

Anſw. Yes. *Fourthly*, that it be with a *Faith in God's Power* and *Spirit*, and a confidence of ſucceſs through that Aſſiſtance. God has promiſed his Grace and Spirit, to make us Good; as well as his Mercy to Pardon us, when we are ſo. And we muſt eye this Promiſe of his Powerful aſſiſtance, when we ſet about any Vertue and Goodneſs. A Faith in his Power, is as neceſſary to make us Good; as Faith in his Mercy towards all good Men, is to make us deſirous of being Good. And to this Faith, the *Scripture* Directs us in working out our Obedience. *Work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you,*

you, and ſo ſtrengthen your Hands in that expectation, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And *we are kept by the Power of God, through Faith*, viz. in that Power *unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Queſt. Is there any other Rule to be obſerved, in ſeeking theſe Graces of the Holy Spirit?

Anſw. Yes. *Fifthly*, that in all the Time we are endeavouring after them, we do nothing to *Grieve*, or *annoy him*. 'Tis with him, as 'tis with every ingenious Perſon, he grows weary of ſtaying, where he finds he is not welcome, and where men are ſtill taking occaſion to diſpleaſe, and paſs Affronts upon him. And therefore, when we are warn'd againſt ſeveral ſins, to conclude all, we are cautioned *not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God*, which is to reſtrain us from them, *Eph.* 4. 30.

Queſt. What things will grieve him?

Anſw. The *Apoſtle* there particularly mentions *obſcene Talk*, and *corrupt Communication*, ver. 29. But he is grieved by our conſenting to all ſorts of Sin, for he is a declared Enemy to all of them. Eſpecially, if we commit any, againſt many of his ſuggeſtions, and checks of Conſcience: As *David* did in the *Murder of Uriah*, after which he was ſore afraid, leſt God ſhould *take his Holy Spirit from him*, Pſ. 51. 11. or if we have ſinned our ſelves up to a Cuſtom; or take delight in ſinning.

Queſt. Doth it offend him knowingly to *Neglect*, and *Slight* his good ſuggeſtions?

Anſw.

Anſw. Yes; for he is concerned to have them take Place, ſince he ſuggeſts nothing to us, but what is moſt agreable to his own moſt Holy Inclinations, the Honour of God, and our Eternal Happineſs. *Let us have*, that is, uſe *Grace, that we may ſerve God acceptably*, Heb. 12. 28. And therefore let this paſs for a *Sixth* Rule of obtaining his ſaving Graces, to *cheriſh the Good Suggeſtions* he inſpires, and always improve the Grace he has already given, to bring down more from him. For, *to him that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance*, Mat. 25. 29. In things of Truſt, this is the way of all Diſcreet Perſons, and ſo 'tis his.

Queſt. If we idely neglect, and fail to cultivate our Preſent Grace, then, he will withhold ſuch further Meaſures, as he Deſigned us?

Anſw. Yes; and after long Patience, at laſt *withdraw the former* too. For, *from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away*, even *that which he hath*, Mat. 25. 29. Thus *Felix*, when he *trembled* at St. *Paul*'s Sermon, not fomenting that Fear, nor proceeding to improve, and penitently reſolve upon it, fell back, and as we have cauſe to think, heard no more of it, *Act.* 24. 25.

Queſt. Theſe ſeem Good and plain Rules, for the attainment of theſe Graces of the Spirit. And when we are careful to uſe them, may we be confident of his Gift, and promiſe our ſelves that he will beſtow them? *Anſw.*

Anſw. Yes; for therein he fulfils the Deſign of *Chriſt* that ſent him, and gratifies his own inclination. And this God has promiſed, and ordered us to expect from him. Bidding us *ſeek, and we ſhall find*, Mat. 7. 7. and declaring, how *to him that hath, ſhall be given*: and *God will give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him.*

Queſt. You have ſhewed me, how we are to attain the Graces of the Spirit. But if they are thus to be our own Attainment, how are they God's Gift? And if, as you ſaid before, God gives them, what need we take all this care, and Pains, to acquire them?

Anſw. If they were an abſolute Gift, indeed, we ſhould not need to do it. For when a Gift is abſolute, no Conditions are required on our part: And then, no defects in us can hinder, nor any diſpoſitions of ours further, and make way for it. It depends not on any thing in us, but is purely God's Act: So that nothing is left for us to do towards it. But theſe Graces, are not an abſolute, but conditional Grant: before the Spirit gives them, he requires ſomething towards them, and works them not in all Men, but only in thoſe who are prepared for them. Some things hinder them, and they are to be carefully avoided: Others further them, and they are to be diligently purſued. So that we are not to expect them, from God's Grace and Spirit alone, unleſs we our ſelves alſo, in ſuch ſort

ſort as I have deſcribed, concur and joyn with him.

Queſt. By what you have ſaid, I perceive how careful the *Holy Ghoſt* is, to fill our Souls with gracious diſpoſitions. Doth he not alſo refreſh them, with ſuch *Spiritual Joy* and *Comforts*, as are apt to reſult from them?

Anſw. Yes. For St. *Paul* reckons *joy, and Peace*, as well as *Meekneſs and Temperance*, for *Fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. and Prays, *that the God of Hope, would fill them with all Joy, and Peace in Believing, and that they may abound in Hope, through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 15. 13. And St *Luke* ſays, *the Churches walked in the Comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 9. 31. And St. *Peter* of the *Diſperſed Strangers*, that *in believing, they rejoyced with Joy unſpeakable*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. And therefore good Chriſtians muſt not affect Scruples, or think it any ſign of Spirituality, to be of a Down-looked and Melancholy Religion: Since Joy and Peace, a Filial Hope and ingenuous chearfulneſs, are Fruits that he loves to produce in them.

Queſt. But doth the *Holy Ghoſt* inſpire theſe comforts into all minds, wherein he diſplays his ſaving Graces, which are the Ground of them?

Anſw. He is inclined to do it in all. And doth it in one degree, or other; not always producing Raptures, and Tranſports of Mind, indeed, but eaſe and quiet-

quietneſs, an inward complacency and comfortable Hope, if they themſelves do not put a Bar againſt him. But ſome minds he ſanctifies, are of a Melancholly Temper, that is, prone to ſadneſs and ſuſpicions, eſpecially of themſelves. Or are frighted by undue-thoughts of God, as if he were Stern and Rigorous, ſoon offended, but very difficult to be reconciled. Or miſtake the Goſpel Terms, as if they were over-rigid, and exacted more than can poſſibly, or at leaſt ordinarily, be performed. Or labour under ſome other cloudy, and afflicting Error, or diſtemper of mind, which hinders a moſt comfortable Religion, and peaceful Piety, from creating any Joy or Comfort, in them.

Queſt. But when there are none of theſe intrinſick impediments, to interpoſe betwixt his Joy and them, doth not he ſometimes *Arbitrarily*, and without any provocation, withdraw himſelf, and hide his Face, as if he were diſpleaſed with them? Which withdrawing, is oft given as the cauſe of many Good mens Grief and Dejection, and is what ſome call *Spiritual Deſertion.*

Anſw. At this rate, indeed, all Spiritual Comfort muſt needs be moſt variable and uncertain, as depending, not on any Conſtancy of good and comfortable Diſpoſitions in themſelves, but on the Arbitrarineſs of ſuch unprovoked withdrawings, to try Experiments upon Men. But this,

I think, is all humane invention; the *Scripture*, on the contrary, teaching us, that when *Sinners purify their hearts, and draw nigh to him, God* doth not withdraw himſelf, and ſhrink away, but *draws nigh to them*, Jam. 4.8. It is an imputation on this good Spirit, not at all agreeing with his inclination, which is to be an immutable lover of goodneſs, and of good men, to be unalterably pleaſed with them, whilſt they do what is pleaſing to him, and to delight in having them take pleaſure and joy in him. It ſeems very oppoſite to his Office and Undertaking. For his Work and Office, as I have ſhewn, is to engender Peace and Comfort, as well as Goodneſs, in the hearts of his Servants. And ſince that is his buſineſs, he will be as conſtant in purſuing it, and no more withdraw his Comforts, than he doth his Graces from them, without being juſtly provoked thereto by ſome act of their own. Nay, on the contrary, when their own melancholly humours, or miſperſuaſions, have intercepted his joyful preſence from good men, he is ready with the light of his Countenance to break thro' that darkneſs, and, in great pity, very often reſtores that Comfort to their minds, which their own errour, or diſtemper, had driven from it. So that theſe arbitrary and unprovoked deſertions, whether in Grace, or Comforts, as they have no foundation in *Scripture*, but there meet with oppoſition; ſo are they not ſuitable to the Holy and good Spirit's na-

tural Genius, or his Undertaking and Office. He always loves and delights in good men, and never voluntarily withdraws himſelf, but is always driven from them.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.

The Contents.

No aſſurance of Salvation by Chriſt, but in his Church. This Church Holy. And Catholick. Admiſſion into it by Baptiſm; when regularly perform'd in any one, valid in all Churches. Excommunication is ſo too. This Church is one Body, by external viſible unity. Of the Communion of Saints in this Church. Of their viſible union in Faith or Doctrine. And in Prayers and Devotion. Of communicating in Publick Prayers. A Sin to ſeparate without juſt cauſe. Impoſing Sins, or Errours, as Conditions of Communion, is a juſt cauſe. Not Lawful to ſeparate for Things indifferent. Nor for better means of edification. Juſt to ſeparate from a Church, that doth not impoſe her Corruptions, when her Errors in Faith overthrow the Foundation. That is, when ſhe ceaſes to own the one true God. Or denys Jeſus to be the Chriſt, or Salvation by his Merits and Mediation. Owning Jeſus to be the Chriſt, implies,

plies, owning the Articles of the Apoſtles Creed, which contains all Fundamentals. Whilſt any Churches hold to this Creed, which is the Foundation, Errors in other things do not unchurch them. But ſuch Erroneous are in a worſe ſtate, than Orthodox Chriſtians. Nor is her Communion to be deſerted meerly for ſuch Errors, tho' very groſs, if ſhe doth not impoſe them. Juſt to ſeparate from a Church of a corrupt Worſhip, when ſinful things pollute her Publick Offices. Or when good Devotions are put up in a ſtrange Language. Not for Rites and Cuſtoms about indifferent Matters. Nor juſt to ſeparate for ſcandalous Members, where a Churches conſtitution is faultleſs. Nor tho' it neglect Diſcipline, which ſhould reform them. Of keeping Fellowſhip with the Apoſtles, by ſubmitting to our lawful Biſhops their Succeſſors. Chriſtians to communicate in Affections, in Alms, and Temporal good Things.

Queſt. WHat is the *Ninth* Article in the *Creed?*

Anſw. The *Holy Catholick Church*, the *Communion of Saints?*

Queſt. Is there no aſſurance of Salvation by *Chriſt*, but in his *Church?*

Anſw. No; for *Baptiſm*, whereby we are made members of the Church, is compared to *Noah*'s *Ark*, whereinto all were to enter, that would not *periſh with the World*, 1 Pet. 3.20, 21. *Chriſt* is repreſented to us, asthe *Head* ſ *his Church*, and the *Saviour*

of the Body, Eph. 5. 23. And *God daily added to the Church ſuch as ſhould be ſaved*, ſaith St. *Luke*, Act. 2. 47. In the Church, all good men have a ſure claim to God's favour, by Promiſes and Compacts, which ingage him in Faithfulneſs. But out of it, they ſtand to courteſie, and can build, at beſt, only on preſumptions, and uncovenanted mercies; the Covenant which God ſeals with us, reſpecting his Church, and being propoſed and ratified in the Word which it preaches, and in the Sacraments which it diſpences.

Queſt. Muſt not this make all careful to be Members of this Body, and keep in Communion with *Chriſt*'s Church, who profeſs Chriſtianity?

Anſw. Moſt certainly, as without which, by their Religion, there is not only a want of the ſet means and opportunities, but alſo of all expreſs Contracts and Promiſes of Salvation. Our Saviour *Chriſt* has appointed not only the Chriſtian Religion, which all are to believe and practiſe: but the Chriſtian Church too, wherein they are to profeſs that Faith, and Communicate as Members. And the ſame Baptiſm, that liſts us Profeſſors of his Religion, makes us Members of his Church alſo.

Queſt. Why is the Church called *Holy*?

Anſw. Becauſe it is a Body of men that is *Holy*, that is, *ſeparated from the reſt of the World*, and *dedicated to Almighty God. Ye are a choſen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And becauſe, whatever

whatever they prove in reality, their Religion is a Profeſſion of Holineſs, as their *Baptiſmal* Vow, which is made at their entrance on Chriſtianity, ſufficiently declares. *To the Church at Corinth, called to be Saints,* 1 Cor. 1. 2.

Queſt. Why is it called *Catholick*?

Anſw. To ſhew its *Univerſality*, and that it is not confined to one Nation or Place, as the *Jewiſh* Church was. And the *Catholick Church* notes the whole Body of Chriſtians, diffuſed through all places, and enduring through all times. The Church is alſo call'd *Catholick*, in relation to the *Faith* it holds, which ought to be the ſame in all Places. And in this ſenſe, *particular* Churches are ſometimes ſtiled *Catholick*, meaning thereby, that they are Orthodox, and live in the Faith and Communion of the Catholick Church, not of any Heretical Combinations.

Queſt. The Church is Catholick, as containing all Places and Perſons: but it is not univerſal as to ſome Acts, which being done any where, are valid, and equally bind every where?

Anſw. Yes; it is Catholick in the Admiſſion into it by *Baptiſm*, which being duly adminiſtred in one Church, makes a man free of the whole Chriſtian Society, and gives him a Right to all Chriſtian Priviledges in all other Churches. So that go where he will, every Church ſhall own him for a Chriſtian, and admit him to Commu-

nion, without requiring him to be Baptiſed over again.

Queſt. So that a true member of *Chriſt*, who is allow'd to Pray, and receive the Sacrament in one Church, ought to be allowed the ſame in every Church?

Anſw. Yes; and ſo they were in ancient times, when upon producing their Certificates, and *Commendatory Letters* from their own Churches, Strangers and Travellers were owned as *Brethren*, and admitted to Communion in the remoteſt Places.

Queſt. And is it not fit they ſhould ſeek this Communion, whereſoever they paſs?

Anſw. Yes; very fit, to ſhew themſelves true *Catholicks*, and that they own the Chriſtians of all other places, as Brethren, and Fellow-members. But this muſt be only where they may be admitted to Communion upon lawful terms. For when Churches will ſuffer none to Pray, or Communicate with them, without profeſſing ſome Errors, or joyning in ſome forbidden Practice, there is no ſeeking to aſſociate with ſuch Aſſemblies.

Queſt. Can you ſhew this *Catholick* efficacy in other Acts?

Anſw. Yes; not to inſiſt on others; *ſecondly*, in excluding Perſons out of the Church by *Excommunication.* For if a man is juſtly excommunicated in one Place, the Church, as I ſhall ſhew, being but one, that is valid and ought to ſtand, till he is duly looſed and reconciled again, in all places. He is

is caſt out by *Chriſt*, who, for any unchriſtian Practices, is regularly and juſtly bound, or excommunicated by the Church of *Chriſt*, for *whatſoever you bind or retain on Earth*, ſaith he, *ſhall be bound and retain'd in Heaven*, Joh. 20. 23. and Mat. 18. 18. And whilſt *Chriſt* himſelf rejects, 'tis not for any other Church of *Chriſt* to receive him. And thus it was in the Ancient Church: where, if any for Heretical ſtubbornneſs, or lewd Lives, were cut off from *Chriſt* by their own Church, no † other Churches would admit them, 'till they had made their peace again. And to prevent any over-ſight, and unwary Communion with an Excommunicate Perſon; when any Strangers and Travellers, eſpecially whom they had ground to ſuſpect, came to them from Foreign parts, they would not admit them to joyn in their Church-Offices, till they produced their * *Communicatory Letters*, to certifie their being in Communion with their own Churches. And this muſt make all good Chriſtians extreamly careful, by all innocent ways, to keep the peace of their own Church; and never contumaciouſly provoke, or proudly ſlight it, preſuming, if it caſts them out, they may do as well, by being let in, and harboured by others. Which if all *Chriſt's* Members really believed, *Church Diſcipline* would not be ſo precarious a thing; nor would any think, as I fear too many do, that a Church is beholding to them, for ſticking to her, and keeping in her Communion.

† *Canon. Apoſt.* 10. 12. 32. *Et Concil.* Nicen. *prim. Cap.* 5. *& Ep. Cler. Rom. ad* Cypr. *Ep.* 30. *ed. Oxon.*

* *Canon. Apoſt.* 12. *vid. Zonar. in loc. & Cap.* 33.

Queſt. What is it to *Believe the Holy Catholick Church?*

Anſw. Not only to believe there is ſuch a Church, but alſo, agreeable to that belief, in all thoſe Acts which declare our Union with it, to adhere to it as its Members, againſt all Factious Innovators, and Dividers.

Queſt. Is this Church but *one Body?*

Anſw. No. *For we are call'd to peace in one Body*, Col. 3. 15. and there is but *one Body, as one Spirit, one Lord, one Baptiſm*, Eph 4. 4, 5.

Queſt. And is it to be one, by an *External, Viſible* Unity?

Anſw. Yes; for an *external Union*, in the *common Offices* and *Advantages* of the *Society*, muſt ſhew it to be, what the *Scripture* calls it, *one Body.* It muſt have ſuch an Union, as may be taken notice of by Men, and from whence they will ſay, *Chriſtians*, are all of *one Religion. I pray not for theſe alone, but for all that ſhall believe on me, through their word: That they may all be one*, and that ſo viſibly, *that the World may* ſee it, and thereby *know and believe, that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me*, Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. And this *viſible union*, is their maintaining *one Communion*, and *Church-Fellowſhip*, i. e. their readineſs to *Pray*, and *Communicate* together, and join in all Acts of Chriſtian *Worſhip, Faith*, and *Charity* with each other. *By this ſhall all Men know, that you are my Diſciples, if ye love one another.* If ye *Love one*

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another, i. e. if ye love ſo as to unite, not only in *Faith* and *Affection*, but in *Worſhip* too, and *pray and communicate together*. For a readineſs to worſhip God together, muſt ſhew as much as any thing their unity in *Diſcipleſhip*, and that they are all Servants of one and the ſame Lord and Maſter, *Joh.* 13. 35. And accordingly, *Prayers* and *Sacraments*, are ſet down among the *Bonds of Union*, which compact together the Members of this *one Church*. Of the *Euchariſt*, ſays St. *Paul*, *we being many are made one Body*, by being *all partakers of that one Bread*, 1 Cor. 10. 17. And of *Baptiſm*, *we are all Baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. and *as many as have been Baptized into Chriſt*, *are all one in Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. 3. 27, 28. And among thoſe various ways, whereby the Church becomes *one Body*, he lays down, as *one Faith*, which they all Profeſs: So *one Baptiſm*, whereof they all partake; *one God, and Father of all*, whom they all invocate with *one Hope*; and *one Lord*, whom they all ſerve and worſhip, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6.

Queſt. Doth this *viſible union* imply a profeſt ſubjection of the whole Church, to one *viſible Head*, the *Biſhop of Rome?*

Anſw. No; that is a Title too haughty to be aſſumed, and a Power too extenſive to be managed by any one Perſon. Beſides, in Scripture, there is not the leaſt mention of this univerſal Headſhip. No, not in the † Liſts of *Church-Powers*, and *Miniſtrations*, where

† 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Eph.* 4. 11.

where this, which is the higheſt of all others, could not be left out. Nor, in Silencing any *Hereſies*, or deciding any *Controverſies* and *Diſputes*, of which there was great number then in the Church; and for determination whereof, as it ought to have been uſed, ſo 'tis not conceivable, had it then been owned, but the *Apoſtles* would have directed and ſent men to it, or the Litigants themſelves would have appeal'd to its ſentence. Among the *Apoſtles*, our Bleſſed Lord precludes all pretence to ſuch Power, telling *the* † *Twelve*, when they were at *Strife who ſhould be higheſt* in Empire and *Lordſhip*, that one of them ſhould not bear Rule, and *exerciſe Authority* over the reſt, *Luke* 22. 24, 25, 26. And as for St. *Peter*, in particular, he ſet up no claim of Power over the other *Apoſtles*, but bore himſelf in all things towards them, and was correſpondently treated by them as a Brother. In any common Debates, and particularly in the *Council of Jeruſalem*, he did not ſo much as preſide, as St. *James* there † ſeems rather to have done, but as an Equal, gave his Reaſons, and his Voice among them, *Act.* 15. 7. When his actings ſeem'd very *Novel* and *Doubtful*, as his *going in to* Cornelius, *and his Gentile Friends*, the *Brethren of the Circumciſion* freely required an Account thereof, and ſtifly contended with him, *Act.* 11. 2. And when they were really *Blame-worthy*, as his *diſſimulation was at Antioch*, St *Paul*, like his Com-Peer *Apoſtle*, openly

† *ver.* 14.

† *ver.* 19.

openly withſtood, and *rebuked him*, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. Theſe, with ſundry other like Paſſages, ſhew how unknown ſuch Univerſal Headſhip was in the *Apoſtles* time. And the ſame may be made appear of the Church, in the Ages following. But that viſible Unity, which all Chriſtians were obliged to endeavour after in the Church, was preſerv'd, as I ſay, by their joint readineſs to communicate externally as Brethren, not by a profeſt ſubjection of all Churches to one Viſible Head, and ſubmitting to his Authority and Juriſdiction.

Queſt. In this one Church, indeed, as it follows in the *Creed*, there muſt be a *Communion of Saints*; what is meant by *Saints*?

Anſw. Chriſtians. By their Enemies, they were ſtyled **Hereticks*, or *Nazarenes*. But the Names they gave themſelves, were the † *Elect*, the * *Brethren*, the † *Chriſtians*, or many times the * *Saints*, as is very commonly ſeen in the *inſcriptions*, or ſalutations, of the *Epiſtles* writ to them, by the holy *Apoſtles*.

* *Act.* 24. 5. 14.
† *Col.* 3. 12 *Tit.* 1. 1.
* *Act.* 9. 30 & 14. 2.
† *Act.* 11. 26.

Queſt. And what is the *Communion of theſe Saints*, or *Chriſtians*?

Anſw. Their *joining in common* in thoſe things, which make them Chriſtians, or in *the common Offices and concerns of Chriſtianity*. There muſt be Communion, becauſe of their Unity as one Body. And this Communion muſt be in ſomething ſenſible, to ſhew a viſible Unity, which the World ſhall ſee, and reflect upon, as I noted from our Saviour.

* *Rom.* 1. 7. 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. *Jude* 3.

Queſt.

Queſt. In what doth this Communion conſiſt?

Anſw. In adhering to the ſame *Doctrine*, *Government*, and *Worſhip*, both in *Prayers*, and *Sacraments*. For in theſe St. *Luke* places the Communion of the Primitive Church. *They continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and Fellowſhip, and breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, Act. 2.42.

How comes ye Text here quoted to have now a word of Government in it? unleſs you ſay it's included in ye word of Apoſtles however that is much too general for our Author's purpoſe.

Queſt. How muſt they keep to the ſame *Faith*, and *Doctrine*?

Anſw. By adhering to the *Holy Scriptures*, which ought to be every where the ſame Rule of it. And this Unity of Faith requiring, not only that they inwardly believe the ſame things, but alſo that they outwardly profeſs that Belief; to make Unity in this Profeſſion, in the *firſt* days there is mention of its being drawn up into a *Form of Sound words*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. This *Form* was, as ſome think, the *Apoſtles Creed*, which contains all that *Catholick* Doctrine, that is neceſſary to make any Man a Good Chriſtian, and which accordingly has been always received as the Form in *Baptiſm*, the moſt learned, not profeſſing more thereat, nor the moſt ignorant, leſs, through all Ages of the Church.

Queſt. This united Adherence to the *ſame Rule* and *Form*, will keep up a viſible Union in *Faith*, or *Doctrine*. But how can they all be thus united in *Prayers* and *Devotions*, not having one and the ſame Forms of Prayer and Liturgies?

Anſw.

Anſw. By making them all according to the *ſame Rules*, and for the *ſame intents and purpoſes*. For all their Prayers are put up to one and the ſame God, for one and the ſame common mercies, on the ſame common terms and expectations, through the ſame common Merits and Mediation, and with the ſame common Affection and Brotherly concern for each other. Which make them in *Subſtance* the ſame Worſhip and Devotions, though put up in far diſtant places, or in different Forms of expreſſion, or Languages.

Queſt. According to what you ſaid before of the *Unity of the Church*, the Members of this one Body, muſt not only worſhip, and pray like each other, but be ready to worſhip and pray together. But how can we communicate, or joyn in the uſe of Prayers, and Sacraments, with all Chriſtians, who are ſo far ſpread, and widely diſtant in their Habitations?

Anſw. With *Foreigners*, we are bound to joyn only as we meet with them. When we happen to be amongſt them, or they amongſt us, to ſhew we are all of the ſame Body, and that the Church is one, we muſt mutually Aſſociate in worſhip, and receive each other to Communion, not ſticking at any different Rites, and uſages we find in other Churches, whilſt there is no Sin in them. And as for the Chriſtians of our *own Country*, there is no difficulty of joining thus in Worſhip, yea, and Government

too

too with them, becauſe we are all under the ſame Laws and ſpiritual Guides, and live among them.

Queſt. Do you lay much weight upon *Publick Prayers*, and think the People ought to place much in attending the Churches Service, and Praying along with the *Miniſter*?

Anſw. Yes. For though God is ready to hear any Good man, by himſelf alone: Yet, for the Countenance of the Publick Worſhip, and the maintenance of good order, he ſets particular marks of Favour on thoſe Prayers which are offer'd to him in Publick, in concurrence with his *Miniſter*. Thus, in the *Jewiſh* Law, he appointed the *Prieſts* to *Offer*, and *burn incenſe* † *twice a Day*, for a *Daily Service*: the end whereof was, to preſent thoſe Prayers, which the * *People* offer'd up during this Miniſtration, as a ſweet ſmell to God in theſe Perfumes. And *David*, when he would deſire a great Recommendation to his Prayers, begs they may come fortifi'd with this advantage, to *be ſet forth in God's ſight like Incenſe*, Pſal. 141. 2. In like manner, the *four and twenty Elders* in the *Revelations*, that is, the Biſhops or Paſtors of the Church, are repreſented as *having every one*, like the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *Golden Vials full of Odors, which are the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 5. 8. And when any Perſons in *ſickneſs*, would have Recourſe to *Prayers*, St. *James* directs them to preſent them by their Paſtors, and *ſend for*

† *Exod.* 30 7, 8.

* *Luke* 1. 10.

for the Elders of the Church, Jam. 5. 14. And *Jeſus Chriſt*, that *Angel*, who *at the Golden Altar, offers up the Prayers of all Saints*, is ſet out particularly as preſenting thoſe *Prayers* of theirs, *which came up with the ſmoke of incenſe*, Rev. 8. 3, 4. Not to mention the many other Advantages of Publick Prayer, as its being an addreſſing to God in a Body, and united Number, which in all Addreſſes, is confeſſedly a way of moſt Force and Power; and among them, perhaps, in conjunction with ſome of the beſt Souls, and very likely, with ſeveral more Holy, and dearer to him, than our ſelves, for *whoſe* * *ſake* he may be more like to hear our joint ſupplications, as he would *hear Job for his Friends*, when he would not *accept* either their *Prayer*, or *Sacrifice*, at their own hands, *Job* 42. 7, 8. And therefore it is a moſt fond and prejudicial, as well as Criminal and inexcuſable careleſneſs, for Men ſo ſloathfully and irreligiouſly, to neglect the *daily opportunities* of *Publick Prayers*, as, God knows, the generality do; yea, though under this neglect they do ſerve God at home, and have Prayers daily in their own Families.

* *Gen.* 20. 7.

Queſt. You ſpeak of Communicating in Prayers, tho' there be no *Sermon*.

Anſw. Yes; for certainly no man, that comes to Church to ſerve God, if he underſtand what that is, can come more for Sermons, than for Prayers ſake. 'Tis for Prayers principally, that we are to come to the

the Houſe of God, for *my Houſe is the Houſe of Prayer*, ſays God, *Iſa.* 56. 7. and *Mat.* 21. 13. In theſe it is, that God's Worſhip doth chiefly conſiſt. And by theſe eſpecially, the Saints of all Times, and Places, thought to worſhip God. And theſe, above all our other Services, our Mediator is careful to offer up to God from us, that, which he is repreſented, as preſenting *at the Golden Altar* from the Publick Aſſemblies, being *the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 8. 3, 4. And therefore it ſhews a very untaught and ignorant, as well as an Irreligious and Prophane Objector, to pretend he will not go to Church, becauſe there is nothing but Prayers: for that is one of the chief things for which he ſhould go thither, and the very Life and Spirit of our Service and Performance there.

Queſt. But if we are bound thus, not only to Unity of Doctrine, but likewiſe to preſerve Unity of Publick Worſhip and Communion, what ſhall we think of *Schiſm*, that is, *rending and dividing the Church*, either the whole Church, or that part where we live, and thereby makeing two Churches out of one? Is it a Sin to Erect new Churches, and ſeparate in theſe Acts of Prayers and Sacraments, from the Body of a Church, or Nation?

Anſw. Yes moſt certainly, and a very great one, except there be a *juſt Cauſe* of Separation. For ſo at *Corinth*, St. *Paul* told them, whilſt *one was for* Paul, *and another for* Apollos, *and there were Diviſions among*

among them, they were Carnal, and walked as men, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3, 4. And at *Rome*, he bids them *mark thoſe who cauſe Diviſions and Offences*, and not adhere and aſſociate with, but *avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17. And this he ſpoke of Schiſm, whilſt it was only an imperfect Birth, not gone on to open Separation, but only to ſuch unquiet practices, and making of Parties, as would ſhortly end therein. For ſo, under all the *Corinthian Sidings* and *Diviſions*, he declares that they *came together* ſtill *in the ſame Church*, and met to partake in the ſame *Worſhip*, yea, and *Supper of our Lord*, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20.

Queſt. What is a *juſt Cauſe* of Separation?

Anſw. A *Neceſſity of ſinning, if we joyn with them.* Which always is, when ſome ſinful things are impoſed by any Society of Chriſtians, as the Conditions of their Communion. We are to maintain the Churches Peace, only † *ſo far as lyes in us*; but we have no Power, or Liberty, to ſin for it. The Church it ſelf is called *Holy*, and therefore we muſt not think to ſhew our ſelves its true Members, by acting unholily. When without ſinning we cannot continue with them, the voice of the *Scripture* is, *come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, and touch not the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. † *Rom.* 12. 18.

Queſt. And when doth a *Church* impoſe ſuch *ſinful things?*

Anſw. When it will not allow us to be of its Communion, without Believing, or

Profeſſing, Errors of Faith; or committing ſins in Practice. As the Church of *Rome* doth, by caſting all out of its Communion, who will not believe that Churches Infallibility, and Tranſubſtantiation, which are Errors in Faith; nor Adore the Hoſt, Worſhip Images, Pray to Saints and An-Angels, and the like, which are ſins in Practice.

Queſt. It is no breach of Church-Unity then, nor Act of ſin, to ſeparate from ſuch Impoſers of unlawful things?

Anſw. No; but an adhering to *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, and the *Univerſal Church* of all Ages, who diſclaim theſe Corruptions. In theſe Particulars, the impoſing Church ſeparates her ſelf from *Chriſt*, and the *Catholick* Church, and therefore we keep the Unity of the *Catholick* Church, in adhering to it againſt her, who makes an upſtart Combination, and proves a *Schiſmatical* Divider.

Queſt. If there is no *juſt Cauſe* of Separating, but when we muſt needs commit ſome ſin in joyning with a Church, then it is never juſt to Separate for *things indifferent*?

Anſw. No; becauſe they lawfully may be done, and have no ſin in them. For all *ſin is the tranſgreſſion of a Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. and therefore there can be no ſin in indifferent things, ſince they would be no longer indifferent, but unlawful, if there were any Law againſt them. We are to *keep Peace as much as lyes in us*; and indifferent things certainly do, ſince they are no where forbid-

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den to us. Nay, in theſe things, a good Chriſtian ſhould be eaſie, not only in ſubmitting to *Church-Laws*, but in complying with Innocent *Church-Cuſtoms*; St. *Paul* thinking it Argument ſufficient in a little Caſe, to ſay, *we have no ſuch Cuſtome, nor the Churches of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 16.

Queſt. Is it unjuſt alſo to Separate from a Church, on pretence the Eſtabliſh'd Means there are *leſs Edifying*?

Anſw. Yes; for the Means were leſs Edifying in the *Aſſemblies* at *Corinth*. Many ſpoke *confuſedly at once*, which was not *a doing Things to edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 27. And many *ſpoke in ſtrange Tongues*, which could not Edifie their Hearers, becauſe they did *not underſtand them*, v. 16, 17. But under this leſs Edifying State, it was not lawful to divide. *Whilſt there are Diviſions among you, are you not Carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. All Chriſtians muſt ſeek to Edifie the Church, as well as themſelves; and the Church is Edified by Unity and Peace. *Follow after the things, which make for Peace, for with them we muſt Edifie one another*, Rom. 14. 19.

Queſt. I ſee there is a juſt Cauſe of Separation, when a Church *impoſes* any Sins, or Errors as Conditions of her Communion. But what if a Church, that is Defiled with theſe, is yet ſo Moderate, as *not to impoſe* them; may ſhe not, for all that, be ſo far corrupted with them, that on account thereof all Good Men, who would take due care

of their own Souls, ought to leave her Communion?

Answ. Yes, if she errs so foully in *Faith*, as to overthrow, or go off from the *Foundation*. Or, if her Corruptions have so overspread, and poison'd all the necessary Parts of her *Worship*, that there is no joyning in her Prayers and Sacraments, without joyning in the Corruptions too, that are Embodied with them. In these cases, *be ye Separate*, saith the Scripture, *and touch not the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. and *come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* Rev. 18. 4.

Quest. One Case, you say, is in *Errors of Faith*, which *overthrow the Foundation*. What mean you by the *Foundation of Faith*?

Answ. Such points of it, as are the very *Bottom* and *Ground-work of the Christian Covenant*, whereinto we are all Baptized, and whereon the Church is Erected. They are such Articles, as are the Root of all that Worship, and Obedience, we are to pay to *God*; of all that Submission, Trust, and Adoration, we are to shew towards *Jesus Christ*; and of all that Labour, and Success, we are call'd to here in the Prosecution of an *Holy Life*. All the Points of our Christian Faith, are a-like *True*: but all Truths, are not a-like *useful*; nor all useful Truths, a-like *necessary*. 'Tis necessary for us to believe all, when we are sufficiently shew'd that Christ has taught them. But 'tis moreover

over neceſſary for us all to ſee he has taught ſome, which are not only to be Believed, becauſe they were Revealed; but were therefore Revealed, becauſe neceſſary to be Learned, and Believed, of all that retain to him. And theſe Points, which are not only Profitable, but neceſſary to the Worſhip and Service of God by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to the maintenance of the Chriſtian Covenant, and of the Church which is Built upon it, are called *Fundamentals*.

Queſt. Can you ſhew me, what points are ſuch?

Anſw. One is the common foundation of all true Religion, *Moſaical*, and *Natural*, as well as *Chriſtian*; and that is, *the Belief of the one True God*, not only of his *Being*, but alſo of his *Providence* and Care to Reward thoſe that ſeek him. Thus St. *Paul* ſets down *Faith towards God*, as one Article to be *firſt laid*, Heb. 6. 1. *For he that comes to God* in any way, ſaith he, *muſt believe that he is; and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6. This *Faith in the one true God*, is overthrown, not only when Men overlook, or deny him; but alſo when they joyn, any *Gentile* Gods, who were Apoſtate Spirits, in Copartnerſhip with him. For every true Church, muſt have *Repentance* from Idols *towards God*, as well as *Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Act 20. 20, 21. And *this is Life eternal*, ſays our Saviour, *to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, Joh. 17. 3. And *he is Anti-*

chriſt, ſaith St. *John*, *that denies the Father and the Son*, 1 Joh. 2. 22. If ſhe caſt off the *Belief of the one true God*, the common Principle of all true Religion, ſhe is the Congregation of ſome Faln Spirits, which ſet up for falſe Gods, and not the Church of the Great God of Heaven. As well, as if ſhe have not *Faith in Chriſt*, ſhe is no longer Chriſtian.

Queſt. But when a Church profeſſes Faith in the one true God, the common Groundwork of all true Religion: What is the Particular Foundation of the *Chriſtian Religion*?

Anſw. Belief of *Jeſus being the Son of God, and the Chriſt*, and *of Salvation by his Merits and Mediation.* When *Peter confeſſed Jeſus to be the Chriſt, the Son of the living God*, our Saviour ſaid, *upon this Rock will I build my Church*, Mat. 16. 16, 18. And St. *Paul* ſays, *the Foundation which he had laid, and other than which no Man can lay, is Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. And the compaſs of *ſaving Knowledge*, marked out by our Lord himſelf, as I noted, is, together with the *Knowledge of the one true God, to know Jeſus Chriſt whom he has ſent.* Whilſt any Church retains this *Faith in Chriſt*, it is Chriſtian, and has Right to *Baptiſm*, as St. *Philip* declar'd to the *Eunuch*, who was *Baptized* upon his making this Confeſſion, *Act.* 8. 37, 38. But if it denys this Authority of *Chriſt*, and its dependance upon him, for ſalvation; it is thereby unchurched,

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and becomes unchriſtian, like *Jewiſh*, *Mahometane*, or *Heathen* Churches, and is put out of the ordinary way of Salvation, there *being no Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we may be ſaved, but his alone*, Act. 4. 12.

Queſt. But doth not this Grand *Article* of *Jeſus being the Chriſt and Saviour*, imply in it ſundry other *Articles*?

Anſw. Yes; if we Believe *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, we muſt believe all the *Holy Scriptures* as his Word, and they contain all Articles. But it more eſpecially implies his *Incarnation*, *Paſſion*, *Reſurrection*, and other great Articles of the *Creed*, which muſt be expreſly owned by every one that rightly underſtands it. And accordingly, in the various Repetitions of this *Grand Article*, and Repreſentations of the *ſaving Faith*, one or other of theſe, is oft-times added, and given as the inſtance of it. * *Believing Jeſus to be the Chriſt, the Son of God, you may have Life through his Name*, ſaith St. *John*, ſhewing the neceſſity of this main Foundation, *Joh.* 20. 31. But St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of this Grand Doctrine, ſays, *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt and him Crucified*; ſetting out the knowledge of *Chriſt*, in the knowledge of his Paſſion, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. And, *if thou confeſs the Lord Jeſus, and believe God raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*; exemplifying the ſaving knowledge of *Jeſus*, in the Belief of his Reſurrection, *Rom.* 10. 9. And when he commanded us to preach him, ſaith

* 1 *Joh.* 4. 15. *&* 5. 1. *&c.*

St. *Peter*, *he commanded us to preach, and teſtifie, that it is he, who is ordained of God, to be the Judge both of quick and dead*; illuſtrating the Preaching *Chriſt*, by preaching the Judgment to come, *Act.* 10. 42. *Every Spirit that confeſſeth Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God*: *And every Spirit that confeſſes it not, is Antichriſt, and not of God*, ſaith St. *John*; explaining the Confeſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, by the Confeſſion of his Incarnation, 1 *Joh.* 4. 2, 3. And ſpeaking of the *Record*, or Witneſs, God had given to the Chriſtian Doctrine, he thus declares the matter atteſted by him, *This is the Record, God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life*; *and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life*: Setting off the Chriſtian Religion, and the Saving Faith, by the Belief of the Life everlaſting, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10, 11, 12. And as for the Belief of the *Holy Ghoſt*, the neceſſity of that, and of our Dependance on him, to make any man a *Chriſtian*, our Saviour has ſufficiently expreſſed, by ordering our very *Baptiſm*, which initiates us into Chriſtianity, to be *into his Name*, *Mat.* 28. 19. All theſe Points, are the very Ground and Foundation, of our Subjection to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, (the Parties we contract withal in the *Chriſtian Covenant*,) of all our Adoration, Truſt, and Submiſſion, to the Bleſſed *Jeſus*; of our worſhipping, and ſerving God by him; and of all that Holi-

Holineſs of Life, which muſt gain us the Divine Acceptance; on all which Accounts, they are neceſſary and Ground-work Articles of Chriſtian Faith, and properly call'd *Fundamentals*.

Queſt. By this it may ſeem, as if the Believing *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, were in more explicit words, to believe the *Apoſtles Creed*, ſince that ſets forth all the Forecited *Articles*. But doth it contain all Points of meer Belief, that are neceſſary and *Fundamental*?

Anſw. Yes. For it was made for a Badge of true Chriſtians; and thereupon, we may conclude, was deſign'd to be no ways Defective, in any neceſſary Articles of Chriſtianity. It has ever been the Form of Faith at *Baptiſm*, and was all which not only the Ignorant, but even the moſt Learned then profeſſed: So that it is ſufficient to make any Perſon a Diſciple and Member of *Jeſus Chriſt*. It was held, and Styled, as is well known, by the *Ancient Fathers*, as the *Canon*, the *Sum*, the *Perfect Sum of Faith*; *that Token, which was ſufficient to ſhew who preached Chriſt according to the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and to diſtinguiſh Believers from Infidels*; that *wherein the Church Educated, and Catechized her Children*; and, in ſum, which paſſed as the Teſt of common Chriſtianity among them. Laſtly, ſince the Compilers of it, ſhort as it is, gave room to ſome things only Circumſtantial, as the *Judge* under whom *Chriſt* ſuffer'd, and the

Time

Time of his Riſing from the Dead: 'Tis not to be thought they would omit any thing eſſential, and of the Body of the Faith, which was neceſſary to be inſerted.

Queſt. Whilſt any Church then profeſſes this *Creed*, which is the Foundation, doth it continue a *Chriſtian Church*, tho' it tacks thereto many groſs Errors, and, as St. *Paul* ſays, *builds Wood, Hay, and Stubble thereupon*? 1 Cor. 3. 12.

Anſw. Yes; for they, who profeſs this, may be Baptized, as I ſaid; and *Baptiſm* admits men into the Church, and makes them Chriſtians. And ſome Churches, in the *Apoſtles* days, had imbibed ſundry great Errors. But retaining ſtill the *Faith in Chriſt*, they were owned, notwithſtanding, as *Churches of Chriſt*, and ſtyled and treated ſo, in the *Apoſtolical* Epiſtles to them. And tho' it be a moſt ſad thing, to conſider of the preſent diviſions of *Chriſtendom*: yet, God be thanked, this *Creed*, which is the full foundation of Faith, is ſtill unanimouſly own'd, and profeſs'd, by all Churches, which make any conſiderable Figure and large ſpread, or have attain'd at this day to become National in the Chriſtian World. On account whereof, how wide ſoever their differences, or great the errors, of many of them are in ſuperſtructures, we muſt ſtill look upon them as *Churches of Chriſt*; tho' ſome, alas! are very degenerate and corrupt ones.

Queſt. And may they be ſaved too?

Anſw.

Anſw. Yes: if they have nothing elſe to hinder their Salvation, but ſuch Errors, and under them they ſincerely fear God, and work Righteouſneſs. For *Chriſt is the Saviour of the Body*: ſo that retaining ſo much truth as may qualifie them to be of the Church, and receive Baptiſm; they have ſo much, as is indiſpenſably requiſite to Salvation. But, that they are ſaved notwithſtanding their great Errors, which imply unbelief of ſome weighty and concerning Truths our Lord has revealed to us, is on the ſcore of their well meant and pityable ignorance, or of their unmaſterable Prejudices and Prepoſſeſſions. Whilſt men hold the Foundation, and err only in ſuperſtructures: tho' their corrupt ſuperſtructures, *their Hay, and Stubble, which they Build thereupon*, as St. *Paul ſays, ſhall be burnt, and ſuffer loſs*: yet, for the Foundations ſake, if they do not hold the errors thro' an evil mind, nor are obſtinate in them againſt convictive evidence, *the Perſons themſelves may be ſaved*, who were ſuch unskilful Builders, 1 *Cor.* 3. 15.

Queſt. Are not ſuch erroneous Chriſtians or Churches then, in as good a ſtate, as more ſound and *Orthodox* ones?

Anſw. No; they are neither ſo ſure of having any Reward, nor, if that falls right, like to receive ſo much of it. For their errors make their paſſage at the *Day of Judgment* to the ſide of the Bleſſed more *hazardous*; errors being puniſhable in ſome, as

as well as pardonable in others, according as they have more or leſs of *willfulneſs*. And if finally they do not hinder it, they will at leaſt render it more *difficult*, and *painful* to them; as the *Apoſtle* intimates, in comparing mens eſcape from among ſuch errors, to ones eſcaping out of a Houſe *all on Fire* about him. Yea, I add, as with much pain and trouble, ſo with much *harm* and *loſs* too. For their ſuperſtructed Works at that day, ſuffering loſs, inſtead of receiving recompence, their reward for the Foundations ſake, which they ſtill hold, will be leſs than the reward of other Chriſtians, who not only hold to it, but alſo build thereon rewardable ſuperſtructures, void of their Corruptions. This the Apoſtle ſets off by † *Fire*, which, when it tryes ſolid Works, like as when it proves *Gold*, or *Silver*, doth no harm, but only makes them finer. But when it meets with corrupt ones, like as when it ſeizes *Hay*, or *Stubble*, it feeds upon, and conſumes them, as combuſtible Matter. *If a mans work*, ſays he, *abide the Fire*, which tryes all Works at that Day, *he ſhall receive a reward* for it. *But if any Man's Work be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, yet he ſhall be ſaved, but ſo as by Fire;*

† Not the *Purgatory* Fire of the Church of *Rome*, which is only for Sinners, whoſe Sins, not fully purged before, are to be purged there, either by the *Fire* it ſelf, or by the *Application of others merits*, in *Indulgences*, or by the help of *Maſſes*, *Prayers*, or *Alms* done for them, by their Friends on Earth. And all this, *before the Day of judgement*; they themſelves, after that is once paſs'd, owning only Eternal Puniſhments. Whereas, the *Fire* here ſpoken of, beſides its liableneſs to *metaphorical* interpretations, if it be *litteral*, is *at the Day of judgment*. *The Day*,

Fire; *i. e.* ſnatch'd out of the midſt of ~~theſe~~ ſuper-ſtructures, as are ſet all on Fire, like a man reſcued out of a Houſe on Fire, where he lay encompaſſed with the Flames: which is a way of eſcape full of dammage, as well as difficulty and danger, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13, 14, 15. So that the reward of the pityable miſled, is neither ſo conſiderable, nor ſo ſecure, as that of the Orthodox and well directed.

Queſt. And whilſt a *Church* holds to this Foundation of Faith, are we not to forſake her, meerly for her building many groſs Errors thereupon, if ſhe doth not impoſe them?

Anſw. No; for under ſuch Errors, as I have ſhewn, it ſtill remains a *Chriſtian Church*: and among all true Chriſtians, there ſhould be the *Communion of Saints*, *i. e.* a readineſs to joyn mutually in the Worſhip, and Offices of our common Chriſtianity. Requiring no unlawful terms of Communion, we may unite with her without ſin; and then if we ſeparate, it is without juſt cauſe; and it is always blame-worthy, to ſeparate cauſeleſly from any Church. And thus the *Apoſtles* taught the Chriſtians to practiſe, in their Days.

viz. That great ſignal Day, which *tryes* and *manifeſts all Actions*, and which *ſhall be revealed by Fire* (the proper Character and Deſcription of the *Day of judgement* in Scripture, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8.) *ſhall declare it*, v. 13. as ſeveral of the *Fathers* talk of a *Purging Fire*, *viz.* The great *Fire* at the end of the World; which they fancy'd might prove all things elſe, when it refines the Earth, and Heavens. And this *Fire* is further ſaid, to be for the Tryal of *every Man*, and of *every Work*, *Gold* and *Silver*, as well as *Wood*, and *Stubble*: not only for the puniſhment of evil Works, and unpurged evil Workers, as theirs is, *v.* 12, 13, 14, 15.

Days. For many great Errors had then crept into the Churches. Some, indeed, ſtruck at the very *Foundation*, as that of *denying Jeſus Chriſt to be come in the Fleſh*, a Point, the *Profeſſion* whereof is neceſſary, to our *having both the Father and the Son*; and accordingly the *denyal of it*, is given as a ſure mark of an *Antichriſt* by St. *John*, and all Chriſtians warn'd not to have *any Communion*, or *Society with him*, 2 Joh. 7, 9, 10, 11. Such alſo was the error of thoſe at *Corinth*, who *deny'd the Reſurrection*, 1 Cor. 15. 12. and that of the moſt rigorous ſort of *Judaizers*, who ſet up, not only the neceſſity of the *Law of Moſes*, but its ſufficiency without any need of *Chriſts Sacrifice*, ſo caſting off all *dependance on his Blood for Salvation*. Both which the *Apoſtle* loads with ſuch heavy conſequences, † telling the *Judaizers* they were *faln from grace*, and *Chriſt would profit them nothing*, or be *of none effect to them*; and the * *Denyers of the Reſurrection*, that *then is Chriſt not riſen, they are yet in their Sins, their Faith is vain*, and ſo *is the Apoſtles Preaching*, &c. as give us cauſe to think, had they prevailed, and become the common Profeſſion in thoſe Churches, they would have rendred them Chriſtians meerly in Name, but in Truth would have unchurched them. But other Churches, that kept true to the Foundation, did in thoſe days build many great errors thereupon. At *Corinth*, they *built Wood, Hay, and Stubble upon the Foundation*; and fell to hold not

† *Gal* 5.2, 4. *&* *Ch.* 1. 6, 7.

* 1 *Cor.* 15.13, 14, 16, 17, 18. *&c.*

1 *Cor.* 3. 12.

not only ſpeculative Errors, but ſome very dangerous Tenets in practice: ſuch as the † lawfulneſs of *inceſtuous Marriages*, eſteemed, as may ſeem, as a thing indifferent, even by the *Paſtors* themſelves; and of * *Communicating in Idol-Feaſts*, wherein they thought they did not ſin, ſo long as they believed *an † Idol is nothing*. At *Colos*, they were prone to ſuperſtition, to place Religion in uncommanded Abſtinencies, ſuch as *touch not*, *taſte not*, *handle not*, which were *the Doctrines* and Devices *of men*, Col. 2. 20, 21, 22. At *Epheſus* St. *Paul* foretold, that *ſeveral would ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe Things*, Act. 20. 30. And at *Rome*, and abundance of Churches in the *Provinces* where the *Jews* had *Synagogues*; beſides thoſe rigid *Judaizers*, who deny'd the *Redemption by Chriſt*, and *merit of his Sacrifice*; there were others, who believed theſe, but yet maintain'd together with them the neceſſity of the *Moſaick* Rites, obſerving the *Jewiſh difference of Meats and Days*, and *teaching the Gentiles to live as do the Jews*, Ro. 14.2,5. & Gal. 2. 14. But amidſt all theſe errors, which were held, ſometimes by Parties and Factions, and ſometimes by the greateſt numbers in the Churches, the *Apoſtles* preach'd to them, to own the erroneous as Brethren, whom, upon the account of thoſe great Truths they held, *God had received*, Rom. 14. 3. to beware of *Schiſms*, and *Diviſions*, as things that ſhew'd *Carnal* Profeſſors, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. and to *keep the*

† 1 *Cor.* 5.

* 1 *Cor.* 8.

† *v.* 4. & *Ch.* 10. 19.

Bond

Bond of Peace, Eph. 4. 3. And upon these Christian Grounds, and in correspondence to these *Apostolical* Ordinances, it is, that the *Protestants* of the opposite *Confessions*, are ready to Communicate with the *Lutherans*, notwithstanding their Errors of *Vbiquity* and *Consubstantiation*. And that the Champions of our own Church, have sundry times declared their readiness to Communicate, even with the Church of *Rome*, in any truly Christian thing, notwithstanding the Errors that Church has added to the Foundation: But that they have barr'd us all out, by imposing their Errors, and so staining and polluting their Worship, that with a good Conscience we cannot joyn with them. And accordingly, whilst they were free to come, and till the Pope forbid them; the *Romanists* were † for many years admitted to our Publick Service, and Sacraments, notwithstanding their different apprehensions, in the first part of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign.

† Cambd. Eliz. *ad An.* 1570.

Quest. I suppose you speak this, of our uniting with them, only whilst their Errors are meer Errors of Faith, and consist in Opinion?

Answ. Yes; for 'tis not so, when they found any corrupt *Worship* thereupon. But if, together with such unfundamental Errors, they have a faultless Worship, which they call us to joyn in; we must not separate for their Errors, whilst they keep them to themselves, and we are under no necessity of

of ſharing in them. And that we never are, whilſt they do not impoſe them, but leave us at liberty, either to diſſent, where their errors are in little Matters; or to gainſay and confute them, where they are of more importance to Religion, and mens Souls.

Queſt. I think I ſee, when a Church errs ſo foully in *Faith*, that we ought to forſake her. But another ground of withdrawing our Communion, you ſaid, is *Corruption of Worſhip*. And when is a Church ſo far corrupted in her Worſhip, that we ought not to joyn in it?

Anſw. That may be, either in caſe of *intrinſick impediments*, in the matter of her Offices. Or, when good Prayers and Devotions are put up to God, but in an *unknown Language*.

Queſt. When is ſhe ſo far corrupted, in the very *matter of her Worſhip*, and Publick Services?

Anſw. When ſhe falls off, either from Worſhipping the one true God; or by one Mediator, *Jeſus Chriſt*; or mixes Sin in all her Prayers, whereby Grace and Mercy are to be ſought; or in her Sacraments of *Baptiſm*, or the *Lords Supper*, wherein that Grace and Mercy are ſealed and convey'd. We cannot live Religiouſly, without Prayers; nor pray to any but the true God, except we pray like *Idolatrous Heathens*; nor Pray to him by any other, but by *Jeſus Chriſt*; the defective Prayers of Sinners needing to be expiated, as was † obſerved, *Chap.* 3.

before they are preferr'd, and not being acceptable from any other hands; nor claim the benefit of his interceſſion for our Prayers, 'till we are Baptized, and made Members of his Church; nor ſhew our ſelves worthy of ſuch a Saviour, and aſſure, as much as may be, the Bleſſings we pray for, without partaking of the Lords Supper. So that if any Church has embody'd Sin into her Service in theſe particulars, we cannot perform the neceſſary parts, and vital acts of Worſhip in her Communion, with a good Conſcience.

Queſt. So that if the Publick Offices of any Church, direct their Prayers and Adorations, not only to God, but alſo to Creatures, either Rational Beings, or ſenſeleſs Images; or if they prefer not theſe Prayers to God, by *Jeſus Chriſt* alone, but make uſe of other Mediators, as *Departed Saints*, or *Angels*; or if they pollute their Baptiſm, and the Lords Supper, by unlawful mixtures; the twiſting of theſe Corruptions into her Worſhip, without any further Impoſition, is enough to bar all good People from joyning with her in theſe Offices?

Anſw. Yes; For as we muſt be careful, publickly to Worſhip and ſerve God; ſo muſt we be as careful, not to offer up any ſinful and forbidden Thing in ſervice to him, which is not to honour and pleaſe, but affront and provoke him. So that when any particular Office, is thus tainted in any Church, we muſt ſeparate from that, although

though at the ſame time, whilſt that will be allowed, we be ready to joyn in others. When 'tis generally corrupt, and ſound and unſound lye intermixt thro all their ſervice, we muſt ſeparate from them in all Offices.

Queſt. But what if the Devotions themſelves are good, and directed only unto God by *Jeſus Chriſt*, but in a *ſtrange Language*, which we do not underſtand. Were it enough to deſert a Churches ſervice for that reaſon?

Anſw. Yes; becauſe God will *have Prayers with the underſtanding*, 1 Cor. 14, 15, 16. and *God being a Spirit*, receives ſuch only, as *Chriſt* notes, *who Worſhip him in Spirit*, which a man doth not, whoſe Spirit is idle, and underſtands not what he ſays to God, *John* 4. 23, 24. So that if any Church locks up her Publick Prayers and Offices in an unknown Tongue, good People muſt ſeek out another, where they may offer up the ſame Services, in a Language their Spirits can joyn in, and Worſhip, as the *Scripture* requires, *to Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. We muſt not ſeparate, as I ſaid, from a ſound Church, only becauſe it ſeems leſs edifying. But we muſt ſeparate, when there is no Devotion, but what is directly contrary to Edification.

Queſt. If we may not ſeparate, where there are ſuch real Faults in a Church; then much leſs for the diſlike of *received Cuſtoms, Rites and Uſages*, when confeſſedly, as you ſaid, in indifferent matters?

This I take to be a very occaſional Conclusion ſo much cried out on by high Ch. at this day.

Anſw. Moſt certainly. To rend the Body, and make diſturbance for light things, ſhews an ill Member in all Societies. Not to *yield* to an *innocent Cuſtom*, as I noted before from St. *Paul*, ſhews a man to be no lover of peace, but a *lover of contention*, 1 *Cor.* 11.16. Nay, if any man would ſhew himſelf a Catholick Chriſtian, he muſt not only readily comply with the indifferent Rites and Uſages of his own Church, which has Authority over him: but, as he has occaſion to paſs by them, or converſe among them, with the Uſages of other Churches, or Chriſtians, tho' very different from his own, ſo long as there is no ſin in them. a Catholick Chriſtian, muſt have a Catholick Spirit, and be ready to ſhew he owns all other Chriſtians, 'till they are regularly caſt out of *Chriſt*'s Church, for Brethren and fellow-members: and never ſtick out from exerciſing with them the common Chriſtianity, whereby all Chriſtians ſerve and honour *Chriſt*, by reaſon of the particular Rites in any Church or Place, which are no offence to him.

Queſt. If we may not lawfully ſeparate from a Church, whoſe Conſtitution has ſome Faults, yea ſome great ones, as were among the Churches in the *Apoſtles* times: I ſuppoſe we may much leſs ſeparate, when the Church it ſelf in its conſtitution is faultleſs, meerly for the *ill* and *ſcandalous Lives* of its *Members.*

Anſw. Moſt certainly. And accordingly St.

St. *Paul* is moſt ſevere againſt the Schiſms at *Corinth*: tho' in the ſame Church, he complains of the horrible prophaneneſs of many among them, who *came drunk to the Lords Supper*, 1 Cor. 11. 21. and *of the Wraths, Envyings, Strifes, Back-bitings, Swellings, Tumults, unrepented Uncleanneſs, Laciviouſneſs, and Fornication*; for which *he feared God would humble him, when he came among them*, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. The *Church* of God in all times, under the *Ancient Patriarchs*, and afterwards in the Nation of the *Jews*, was a mixt Society of good and bad livers. And in Chriſtianity it is compared to a † *Net*, that *catches Fiſh of every kind*; and to a * *Field*, ſown with *Tares*, as well as *Wheat*, and wherein *both muſt grow together, till the* Great and General *Harveſt*. 'Tis always its misfortune here, together with ſome true Saints, to have ſome Hypocritical Profeſſors. So that were we to ſeparate from a good Church for this Cauſe, we muſt ſeparate from all Churches, and could hold Communion with no Church on Earth. And therefore men muſt never think of leaving a good Church, becauſe it happens to have ſome corrupt People, or ſcandalous Miniſters. From the Sins we muſt ſeparate, which give the ſcandal, but unite, and adhere to the Church, which condemns them: the good muſt not deſert it, becauſe the bad will not obey, and be ruled by it.

† *Mat.* 13. 47.

* ver. 24, 25, 30.

Queſt. But what if it doth not uſe the *Rod of Diſcipline* to correct them?

Anſw. We are not to ſeparate notwithſtanding, as the *Apoſtles* told the Churches, where the Sins were too ſtrong, And the Sinners too numerous for Diſcipline, or the *Paſtors* too remiſs in uſing it. Thus the *Paſtors* were at *Corinth*, who, inſtead of *mourning over the inceſtuous Perſon, were rather puff'd up with him*, 1 Cor. 5. 2. And yet for all this, St. *Paul* would not bear, to hear of any tendencies towards *Schiſm* among them, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. Thus alſo it was at *Pergamus*, where ſeveral were infected, with the ſcandalous *Doctrines* of the *Nicolaitans*, Rev. 2. 15. and at *Thyatira*, where the followers of *Jezabel* the *Falſe Propheteſs*, were *ſuffer'd to go on* in their Spiritual *Fornication*, and *Sacrificing to Idols*, v. 20. And in other *Churches*, which either out of neceſſity, or neglect, relaxed the reins of *Diſcipline*, and tolerated ſcandalous Perſons, in the *Apoſtles* own times. But yet no plea for ſeparation, would ever be admitted by them on this pretence. In theſe caſes, the Church muſt anſwer, for the neglect of its power; and ſcandalous Sinners, for the ſcandals they give; but as for any private Chriſtians, whilſt they neither help on their ſcandals, nor imitate them, their Conſciences are not defiled with them. Beſides, the growth of *Schiſm*, has been one of the greateſt weakners of *Diſcipline*, one Congregation admitting and harbouring men, when another

ther rejects them. And therefore, to pretend want of Diſcipline for ſeparation, is not only a moſt diſ-ingenuous thing, but the way to bring Diſcipline, which they complain of as too little already, to be none at all.

Queſt. By what you have diſcourſed on this Point, I perceive we are never Guilty of *Schiſm*, in ſeparating from any Church, when we have juſt cauſe. But that all breaking off, from any Part of *Chriſt*'s Body, is *Schiſmatical*, which is Cauſeleſs.

Anſw. Yes. And ſo is all *Driving* others into Separation, by *impoſing ſinful Terms*, as the *Condition of their Communion*. And then, which is the laſt thing I ſhall note concerning it, Schiſm from any Churches is moſt compleat, when we do not only ſeparate from their Religious Aſſemblies and Divine Offices, but withal, deny them to be Members of Chriſt's Body, or Parts of the Catholick Church. This is the Higheſt ſtep in Separation, and leaves not the leaſt Ground for Church-Communion. For 'tis only the *Members of Chriſt*'s *Body*, that muſt Communicate under him their Head, in the *proper Offices of Chriſtianity*; and the *Communion of Saints* profeſs'd in the Creed, is only within the compaſs of the *Catholick Church*. So that if we cut off any Societies, from being Members of *Chriſt*, and a *true Church*, we muſt have no more Communion with them, than if they were profeſt *Heathens*. And this was the Sacrilegi-

I leave any impartial man to judge who are likest the Donatists herein, high Church or no.

ous Breach of the *Donatists*, and *Novatians*; the Consummation of whose *Schism*, was their confining the Catholick Church to their own Party, and allowing no Church, no Sacraments, or Promise of Salvation, but among themselves.

Quest. There remains yet one instance, of the Communion of the *Primitive* Christians mentioned by St. *Luke*, viz. *Continuing in the Apostles Fellowship*, Act. 2. 42. I pray you what is meant by that?

Answ. Owning their Authority, and *continuing under their Government.* They were appointed by *Christ*, as his *Deputies*, to Govern his Church; and therefore adhering to them, as the Delegates of *Christ*, is call'd *living in their Fellowship.*

Quest. But how can we live in their Fellowship, and adhere to their Government, now they are dead?

Answ. By adhering to, and owning the Authority of our *own Bishops*, who are their *Successors*, and rule the Church in their stead. *Christ* told the *Apostles*, *he would be Present with them, to the end of the World*, Mat. 28. 20. Being present with their Successors, he calls being Present with them. And in like sort, keeping Fellowship with our Lawful Bishops, who are their Successors, is keeping Fellowship with them. *He that one sends*, saith the *Jews*, *is as himself.* And accordingly, when *Christ* had sent out his *Apostles*, he tells them, *he that receiveth you, receiveth me*, Mat. 10. 40. and *he that receives whom-*

whomsoever I send, receiveth me, Joh. 13. 20. And the *Apostle* commends the *Galatians*, that *that they received him, not only as an Angel of God, but as Christ Jesus*, Gal. 4. 14. And St. *Ignatius*, that Blessed *Martyr*, and contemporary of the *Apostles*, applauds the *Trallians*, that *they were subject to their Bishop, as to Jesus Christ, and to the Presbytery, as to the Apostles.* In *Scripture* Account, and Legal estimate, that is done to any Persons, which is done to their Substitutes and Representatives. And thus keeping Fellowship and Subjection, to the Bishops of the Church in all Ages, who were at first sent and commissioned by the *Apostles*, and empowered to send and ordain others at all times, is holding Fellowship, and paying subjection to the *Apostles* themselves, and by them to *Christ Jesus.*

Quest. This then is one Part of the Communion of Saints, to live subject to our own *Bishops*, not suffering our selves to be drawn away by such as would seduce us, but adhering to them against all *Schismatical* Opposers?

Answ. Yes. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves*, Heb. 13. 17. And *mark those that cause Divisions, and avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17. Be their Pretences, and Appearance, what they will, if they lead us into *Schism*, and an unnecessary Rejecting of our Lawful Governours, God hath not sent, nor doth his Spirit go along with them. That cannot lead to Schism, *it is the*

i.e. those that know us & watch over us in the L^d, & not a Diocesan whom perhaps we never saw, & who neither does nor can take any manner of care of us.

the Author of Peace, not of Confusion, 1 Cor. 14. 33. It will not put us upon a needless rejecting of our Spiritual Governours, since Adherance to them in the *Apostles* Days, as I noted before, was made a Test of discerning True Spirits from False ones. *We are of God, he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error*, 1 Joh. 4. 6.

Quest. But if a Man is careful to Believe, and Practise *Christ*'s own Laws and Doctrines; is not that enough to make him a good Christian, except he likewise submit to *Church-Rulers*, and peaceably conform to their innocent Constitutions, and Rules of *Discipline?*

Answ. No. For this is one of his Laws, *to obey those that have the Rule over us, and watch for our Souls, and to submit our selves*, Heb. 13. 17. He orders them to take care, that *all things* in his Worship, *be done decently, and to Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 40. And he requires us to obey, and submit to their ordering. A good Christian, is not only one that believes and professes the *Christian Religion*, but is also a Member of the *Christian Church*. And they cannot be good Church-members, who will not submit so far as conscionably they may, to Church-Governours, nor Communicate in Church-Offices.

Quest. I see the *Communion of Saints*, implies their Communion in Christian *Doctrine*,

ctrine, Worſhip, and *Government.* But doth it not alſo imply *Communicating,* not only in Affections, but in all *Good Offices,* in *Alms* and *outward Things?*

Anſw. Yes; *to do Good, and to Communicate, forget not,* Heb. 13. 16. And the Receiving their charitable Contributions, St. *Paul* calls *taking upon him the Gift, and Fellowſhip* or Communion, *of Miniſtring to the Saints,* 2 Cor. 8. 4. In the extream diſtreſs of the *Jeruſalem Chriſtians* at *firſt,* this communication of Alms was wonderful: For *all that were Rich, ſold their Poſſeſſions,* and put them into a *Common Stock, to be diſtributed* by the *Apoſtles, as every one had need,* Act. 2. 44, 45. and c. 4. 33, 34. And in other places, where they did not take this courſe, yet was Communicating, as in all good Offices, ſo particularly in outward Things with their poorer Brethren, the Profeſſion of all Chriſtians. Their Rule was, *as they had opportunity, to do Good unto all, but eſpecially to thoſe of the Houſhold of Faith,* Gal. 6. 10. And to do good to theſe more particularly, when they travelled about as Strangers, and fled from place to place, for the *Faith of Chriſt*: which is the *Charity* and *Hoſpitality* of the *Scriptures,* ſo much magnified.

* *Rom.* 12. 13. 1 *Pet.* 4. 9. *Heb.* 13. 2.

Queſt. When any *Saints* then of Foreign Countries, are forced to fly, and come among us for *Chriſt*'s ſake, to entertain them in our Houſes, and communicate to them of our Subſtance, which is here profeſſed, is

is of Great Account with God?

Anſw. Yes, of high Account. For it is one of thoſe Good Deeds, which *Chriſt* will expreſly mention in our behalf at the laſt Judgment. *Come ye Bleſſed, inherit the Kingdom:* for *I was a Stranger, and ye took me in*, Mat. 25. 34, 35. And therefore St. *Paul*, when he tells us of *diſtributing to the neceſſities of Saints*, reminds us particularly, of being *given to Hoſpitality*, Rom. 12. 13.

CHAP. X.

Of the Forgiveneſs of Sins.

The Contents.

What Sin is. Of wilful ſins. Of ſins of Ignorance, Surreption, Paſſion. Forgiveneſs of ſin, is the Releaſe of its Puniſhment. When Eternal Puniſhments are remitted, Preſent and Temporal are often exacted. What is the Time of Relaxing theſe Puniſhments. Remiſſion of all ſins, but Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt. And wilful Apoſtacy from Chriſtianity. Wilful ſins forgiven, when we Repent, and forgive others. Sins of Ignorance and inadvertence, upon our Charity to others. This forgiveneſs outwardly diſpenſed in Baptiſm. The Euchariſt. And Sacerdotal Abſolution. The Power of the Keys lies in Retaining as well as Abſolving, which ought

to beget a juſt dread of Excommunication. What is meant by our Forgiving ſins. What uſe we are to make of the Forgiveneſs of ſins.

Queſt. WHat is the *Tenth* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. I *Believe the Forgiveneſs of Sins.*

Queſt. What is Sin?

Anſw. The *Breach of a Commandment*, or a Tranſgreſſion of ſome Law of God, committing what his Law forbids, or omitting what it injoins us. *Sin is the Tranſgeſſion of the Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. And all the Laws of God, which we tranſgreſs in ſinning againſt him, are contain'd in Holy *Scripture.*

Queſt. Then we never offend God, nor ſhall ſuffer for any thing, but what the *Scripture* has forbid, and againſt which we can produce ſome Law out of it?

Anſw. No; for *Sin is not imputed, where there is no Law*, Rom. 5. 13. And it muſt always be *a Law that worketh Wrath*, i. e. makes us liable to ſuffer it, *For where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion*, Rom. 4. 15. *The ſtrength of ſin is the Law*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. and *the Law enter'd, e're ſin did abound*, Rom. 5. 20.

Queſt. To prove any thing Sinleſs and Lawful then, it is not neceſſary to produce a Law, or Example for it, ſince a Law commanding it, would render it not barely Lawful, but neceſſary; but it is enough, that

that there be no Law againſt it?

Anſw. Very right; for till a Law forbid a thing, there is no ſin in it.

Queſt. What is a *Wilful* Sin?

Anſw. A Sin *againſt Knowledge*, or, do ing what we know to be diſpleaſing to God And this, either, when we are aware of th Evil, at the Time we commit it; or ſhoul have been ſo, but that we have accuſto med our ſelves to it, which makes us ſi without obſerving that we do ſo.

Queſt. If a Man by cuſtom brings him ſelf to Swear, or Lye, or the like, withou thinking of it, his Sin you ſay ſay is wilful for all he doth not bethink himſelf in com mitting it?

Anſw. No doubt of it; for he wilfull contracted this Cuſtom and Habit, whic is ſo far from being an excuſe for his Sin that it is one of the greateſt aggravation of it. The Habit of Sin, is called the *Law of ſin*, Rom. 7. 23. and *the Body of Death* ver. 24.

Queſt. What if a man has ſuch a mind t a Sin, that he will not ſee it, but check and ſtifles all Thoughts that would ariſe in his mind againſt it? Nay, perhaps en deavours to deceive himſelf, and come to a Perſuaſion, that there is no Fault, or, it may be, ſome Praiſe in it?

Anſw. He is a wilful Offender indeed, be cauſe his own Will makes him ignorant, as it did the *Phariſees* and other *Jews*, who were *wilfully Blind*, Mat. 13. 15.

Queſt. When is a wilful Sin *againſt Conſcience*?

Anſw. When 'tis acted againſt the preſent checks of our own minds, and under Fears and Relentings.

Queſt. And when is a Sin againſt Conſcience, called *Deliberate*, which, I ſuppoſe, is a higher pitch of *Wilfulneſs*?

Anſw. When 'tis committed after Fears and Debates, and we conſider'd and diſputed with our ſelves for ſome time, whether to do it or no, before we ventur'd on it.

Queſt. What is a ſin of *Ignorance*?

Anſw. When we do an Evil thing, not knowing it to be a ſin, nor ſeeing its ſinfulneſs.

Queſt. Doth *Ignorance* excuſe any Offences?

Anſw. Yes, when men are not ignorant through culpable Neglects, nor blinded by wicked Luſts. For in this eaſe 'tis ſaid, *Chriſt can have compaſſion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous*, Heb. 5. 2. But when they have no mind to ſee a Thing, nor care to find it out, that Ignorance is faulty, becauſe chargeable on their own wills.

Queſt. What ſay you, when their Judgments are reſolv'd on the wrong ſide, and they act under Erroneous Opinions? Are they not excuſable in any Actions, ſo long as they only *follow their Conſcience*?

Anſw. No; except their Conſcience Errs ſo pitiably, as to be reaſonably qualified for excuſe. The *Jews* followed their Conſciences,

ſciences, when *they crucified Chriſt*, Act. 3. 17. and 1 Cor. 2. 8. but yet God eſteemed them *wicked Murderers*, Act. 7. 52. *Paul verily thought*, that *he ought to Perſecute the Church*, Act. 26. 9. But in that he declares, he was *the greateſt of ſinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. *The times are coming*, ſaith our Lord, *that they who kill you, will think therein they do God ſervice*, Joh. 16. 2. But yet God would take vengeance on them, for *the Blood* of theſe *Righteous* Perſons, Mat. 23. 35. 'Tis no ſufficient warranty in what a Man doth, that he follows his Conſcience, except he take care to have a right Conſcience, or when 'tis wrong, it err only through miſfortunes, not out of a wilful Neglect, a wicked Luſt, or an unteachable Temper.

Queſt. What is a Sin of *inadvertence*?

Anſw. When in the general we know a thing to be a ſin, but are not free at the time of acting it, to conſider, and reflect upon its ſinfulneſs. This generally happens, becauſe we do the evil ſuddenly, e're we can bethink our ſelves, whence they are called ſins of *Surreption*, i. e. which ſteal upon us unawares, and ſins of *Surpriſe*. And thus it falls out, in the many ſudden envious, luſtful, repining, or otherwiſe ill thoughts, or Deſires; the beginnings of Anger, the raſh Words and Cenſures, Good People are Guilty of. All which, till they can come to obſerve them, if then they are careful to check and Repreſs them, are pitiable inadvertences and ſurpriſes, which, becauſe

becauſe we are all apt daily to fall into more or leſs, are call'd ſins of *Daily incurſion.*

Queſt. What think you of ſins of *Paſſion*, when either mens own Conſciences, or other Friendly Monitors, tell them they are doing ill, but they go on notwithſtanding, becauſe Paſſion is ſtrong, and Luſt, or Anger, hurries them away, being very high in them?

Anſw. Theſe are not perfectly wilful, becauſe, when their Paſſions are at ſuch height, their Wills are captivated, and have little Power over them for that time. But they are puniſhable, as wilful ſins are, becauſe it is Mens voluntary Fault, if they do not mortifie all ſuch inordinate Paſſion; and they that belong to *Chriſt*, muſt not ſuffer Paſſion to ariſe ſo high, that it can captivate and reign in them. *They that are Chriſt's, have Crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections*, or Paſſions, *and Luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, I perceive what *Sin is*: but what is meant by the *Forgiveneſs* of it?

Anſw. A *Releaſe of the Puniſhment*, which is due to it. For then God forgives a ſin, when he acquits Men of the Puniſhment of it. And becauſe this is a paſſing over ſins, as if they had never been, and taking no notice of them: it is called *covering ſins*, and *not imputing them*, Rom. 4. 7, 8.

Queſt. What are the Puniſhments due to Sin?

Anſw. Death, and *Diſeaſes*, and all the

Miſeries of this World. But eſpecially the *Eternal Torments* of *Hell Fire* in the *next.*

Queſt. The Eternal Pains of Hell, muſt needs be acquitted, when a Sinner is pardon'd. For we can never think any ſin pardon'd, whilſt the Sinner is eternally ſuffering for it. But when the everlaſting Puniſhments of the other Life are releaſed, are all the Temporal Inflictions in this Life ſtruck off too?

Anſw. No, for *Death is the Wages of ſin* Rom. 6.23. and that ſtill is all Mens Portion. And when Men by their ſins have greatly diſhonoured God, or given great Scandal unto others, to manifeſt the juſtice of his Providence, God oft-times here chaſtiſeth them by preſent Judgments, yea, even after they have Repented, and he has thereupon remitted to them all eternal Pains. Thus when *Nathan* told Penitent *David*, that *God* ſeeing his Repentance, *had put away his ſin* ſo that as to the laſt account, he would *be acquitted*: Yet, *becauſe* thereby *he had given occaſion to the Enemies of God to Blaſpheme* he ſhould be puniſhed here, and *the Child ſhould die* for it, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13, 14. And at *Corinth*, ſeveral of thoſe who on the ſcore of their Repentance, *ſhould not be condemned with the Wicked World* at laſt: Yet, for their Scandalous Prophanations of the *Lord's Supper*, were *ſickly, and weak, and fell aſleep* at preſent. 1 *Cor.* 11. 30, 32. And *the Ma of God* from *Judah*, being pitiably ſeduced by a Diſſembling *Prophet*, without an thin

thing that appears of an Evil intent, and having firſt faithfully, and boldly declared God's Meſſage againſt *Jeroboam*'s *Altar*, we may reaſonably hope, was mercifully ſpared as to the other World. But yet here God met him by the way, and *devoured him by a Lion*, for yielding to a Seducer, *to eat Bread againſt the Word of the Lord*, 1 King. 13. And this ought mightily to reſtrain us all, from acting any great diſhonour to God, or crying Offences, for which God may judge us in our Perſons, Eſtates, or Families, in this World, when upon our true Repentance, he acquits us in the next. *Penitence* is not ſo good a Preſervative againſt the ſting of theſe, as *innocence* is. For ſuch Offences do always juſtly expoſe us to Temporal *Calamities*, and ſometimes make it neceſſary for us that we ſhould be ſeverely corrected in this World. Which conſideration ought to reſtrain all, that regard either their owu, or their Families welfare in this World, from ever being guilty of them.

Queſt. When are theſe puniſhments relaxed, and what is the *time of Pardon?*

Anſw. The ſolemn, full, and irreverſible declaration of it, is at the *Day of judgement*. But before that, God pardons the ſins of good Men in this life, giving them a general pardon of all ſins in *Baptiſm*, and of all particular Failures afterwards, as they repent of them. So on *David*'s repentance, for the *matter of Uriah*, *Nathan*

than told him, *God had put away his Sin*, 2 Sam. 12. 13.

Queſt. Is this forgiveneſs in this World perfect, and irreverſible, ſo that when once any ſins are ſtruck off, they are never more placed to account?

Anſw. No; but limited, and ſuſpended on Terms, *viz.* mens *perſeverance in repentance*; for, if after their pardon they fall off, and relapſe into the ſame wickedneſs, they ſhall be unpardon'd all again, and ſtand accountable for all former Tranſgreſſions. *If the Righteous man turn from his Righteouſneſs, to iniquity*, ſaith God in *Ezekiel*, *all the Righteouſneſs he hath done, ſhall not be mention'd to him, but in his Sins that he hath ſinn'd, ſhall he dye*, Ezek. 18. 24. & 33. 12, 13. And when the *Debtor*, to whom his *Lord had pardon'd all his great Sums*, had render'd himſelf unworthy of that grace, by his mercileſs uſage of a *ſmall Debtor among his fellow Servants*, his incenſed Lord cancel'd the Pardon, and exacted all the diſpunged Accounts. And *ſo*, ſays *Chriſt*, *will my Heavenly Father do with you in like caſe*, Mat. 18. 24, 27, 30, 34, 35.

Queſt. Do we believe the forgiveneſs of all Sins?

Anſw. Yes; except the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, and *willful Apoſtacy* from the Faith of *Chriſt*, for which there is no forgiveneſs.

Queſt. I have ſeen already, that there is no Pardon for *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*!

Ghoſt. But is there none alſo, for *willful Apoſtacy from Chriſtianity?*

Anſw. No; *for if we ſin willfully, i. e.* by willful Apoſtacy, *after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, i. e. Chriſt's* Sacrifice is not deſigned to expiate ſuch offence, *Heb.* 10. 26.

Queſt. Is that *Sinning willfully, willful Apoſtacy* from Chriſtianity?

Anſw. Yes. For theſe Sinners, ſaith the *Apoſtle, tread under foot the Son of God, i. e.* affirm *Chriſt* to be ſtill in the Grave, not riſen from the Dead; *and count the blood of the Covenant,* or *Chriſt's* Blood, *an unholy Thing, i. e.* as the Blood of a Malefactor, and ſay it was juſtly ſhed; *and do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, i. e.* deſpite the Holy Ghoſt, which confirm'd Chriſtianity, and reject all his Miracles as *Satanical* deluſions, *v.* 29. So that theſe Sinners were plainly *Apoſtates,* who ceaſed to own, and had begun to accuſe *Chriſt,* as the *Jews* and *Heathens* did. And the ſame Apoſtacy St. *Paul* ſpeaks of in another place, when he tells us, *if Chriſtians fall away, i. e.* from their Chriſtianity, whereby *they Crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh,* or joyn in Condemning him with his Crucifiers, *it is impoſſible to renew them again unto repentance,* Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

Queſt. But all other Sins you ſay, we may believe, and truſt to have the pardon of?

Anſw. Yes; thro' the *merits of Chriſt,* and

the *mercy of God.* So *Chriſt* Commiſſions his *Apoſtles*, to *Preach Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins, to all Nations*, Luk. 24. 47. And *if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And *all manner of Sin and Blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto men, but that againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall never be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 31.

Queſt. You would have no Sinners then to deſpair of Mercy, or think their Sins greater, than *Chriſt*'s merits, or God's grace, and too big to be forgiven?

Anſw. No, by no means. For *Chriſt*, by his moſt precious death, has gain'd a full Pardon for the greateſt Sins, and ſends out his *Apoſtles* to Proclaim it to the greateſt Sinners. *David* was guilty of *Adultery*, and *Murder*; *Paul* was a cruel and *bloody Perſecutor*, and *Blaſphemer*; *Peter* was perjuriouſly falſe, and *denyed his Maſter*. But † all theſe were forgiven, and none need, or muſt deſpair, as if, when they Repent, God had not pardon enough in ſtore.

† 2 *Sam.* 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 1. 13 16. *Mat.* 26. 70.

Queſt. Theſe, indeed, are inſtances of the greateſt ſins. But is there forgiveneſs for them, when they are committed with the moſt aggravating Circumſtances?

Anſw. Yes. For *David*'s Murder, and Adultery, was with much † *deliberation* and *contrivance*, and againſt ſo many ſtruglings and reluctances, that thereby he became almoſt quite * *hardned*, and of a ſeared Conſcience. And *Peter*'s denyal, was repeated

† 2 *Sam.* 11.

* *Pſ.* 51. 10, 11.

ſeveral

ſeveral times, and thoſe † conſiderably diſtant, to allow ſpace enough for remorſe, and that too with falſe Oaths, and bitter imprecations. But both theſe obtain'd mercy, on their true repentance. † *Luk.* 22. 56,58,59.

Queſt. You ſay on true *Repentance*. Is all this forgiveneſs then, upon ſome *Terms* and *Conditions*?

Anſw. Yes; for God's grants of grace are, as in conſideration of *Chriſt's* Sacrifice, ſo alſo of our Faith and Repentance. And therefore neither to Infidels, nor impenitent Perſons.

Queſt. Upon what terms muſt we believe God will forgive us any *willful Sins*?

Anſw. When we *repent* of them, and *forgive others*.

Queſt. Will he not pardon them, 'till we repent and amend them?

Anſw. No; for to all the willful Sinners of the World, the *Apoſtles* were to *Preach Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins*. And of theſe 'tis ſaid, *he that confeſſes, and forſakes his Sins, ſhall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

Queſt. But when we have repented, and left theſe Sins, will he not forgive us ſtill, unleſs we *forgive others*, that have treſpaſs'd againſt us?

Anſw. No; there is no forgiveneſs, neither for impenitent, nor uncharitable Perſons. *For if ye forgive men their Treſpaſſes, your Heavenly Father will alſo forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their Treſpaſſes, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you,*

Mat. 6. 14, 15. And therefore when we pray for forgiveneſs, our Lord allows us to do it only upon theſe terms. *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that Treſpaſs againſt us.*

Queſt. What if we have *wronged* any Perſons? is it not enough towards forgiveneſs to do ſo no more?

Anſw. No, it is not; but withal, we muſt *make Reſtitution* and amends, for the wrong we have done already. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt thy Brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come, and offer thy Gift*, Mat. 5. 23, 24.

Queſt. I ſee we muſt hope to have forgiveneſs of our Sins of *willfulneſs*, and alſo of our *Sins of Paſſion*, which you ſhew'd to be of like guilt with them, only upon our true Repentance, and amendment of them. But upon what terms, ſhall our ſlips of *ignorance*, and *inadvertence* be pardon'd, ſince they are never perfectly amended, but hang about us more or leſs, as long as we are in this World?

Anſw. Upon our *great Charity* to other men, eſpecially to their Souls, in endeavouring their Converſion, and Salvation. And therefore that St. *Peter* recommends above all other Virtues, and for this Reaſon. *Above all things, have fervent Charity among your ſelves, for Charity ſhall cover the multitude of Sins*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. And *if any of you*

you err, and one convert him, let him know, that he, who converts a Sinner from the Error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall hide a Multitude of ſins, Jam. 5. 19, 20.

Queſt. For whoſe ſake doth Almighty God allow us all this Benefit of Forgiveneſs?

Anſw. For *Jeſus Chriſt*'s, who, as you have ſeen, dyed for our Sins, and gave his blood a Ranſom, to purchaſe for us all this Pardon of them. *He is ſet forth a propitiation for the remiſſion of Sins that are paſs'd, thro' Faith in his Blood*, Rom. 3. 25. And then for his ſake we ſhall receive all this mercy, when, with the diſpoſitions before expreſs'd, in his Name we devoutly pray to God for it.

Queſt. By the promiſes of the Goſpel, I ſee this forgiveneſs is aſſured to all Chriſtians, upon the terms you have deſcribed. But is it in any *Signs*, and *Tokens*, *outwardly diſpenſed* to them?

Anſw. Yes; both in the *Holy Sacraments*, and in *Sacerdotal Abſolution*. Which ways of miniſtring this forgiveneſs, as well as the forgiveneſs it ſelf, are noted in ſome Ancient Creeds: This Article being thus profeſs'd in St. † *Cyprian*'s Form at *Baptiſm, I believe the Remiſſion of Sins by the Church.*

† *Ep. ad Januar. &c. & Ep. ad Magnum. Ep.* 69, 70. *Ed.* Oxon.

Queſt. Is this forgiveneſs diſpenſed to us in the Sacrament of *Baptiſm*?

Anſw. Yes; and that moſt amply, the water

water of *Baptiſm* waſhing off the ſtain of all former Sins. *Be Baptized, and waſh away thy Sins*, ſaid *Ananias* to *Saul*, Acts 22. 16. *Repent, and be Baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins*, ſaid St. *Peter* to the *Jews*, Acts 2.38. And *he hath ſaved us by the Laver of Regeneration, i. e.* the water of Baptiſm, *and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit.3 5.So that whatever poſlutions men had before upon them, if they come to *Baptiſm*, with true Faith and Repentance, they are thereby made clean again.

Queſt. Is it alſo diſpenſed in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper?*

Anſw. Yes; if after the *Baptiſmal* cleanſing, they relapſe, and contract new guilt, in that they are admitted to renew the ſame Covenant of Grace again, and ſeal the Pardon of it. For therein *Chriſt* gives us *his own Blood, which*, as he ſays particularly, *was ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins*, Mat. 26. 28. He entertains us there at his own Table, which is an open profeſſion to all worthy comers, that he is reconciled to them, and receives them again as Friends. And therefore, when any Baptized Chriſtians are ſtartled, and terrified with the Conſcience of their Sins, let them repair to that Holy Sacrament, to ſeal, and aſſure the forgiveneſs of them. But let them come with Faith, and Repentance, and Reconciliation to their Brethren; which, as I ſaid, are the Terms of our being Forgiven. For the Holy Sacraments diſpenſe this forgiveneſs to none, but ſuch as worthily receive them, and thoſe they

they do cleanſe from all former Pollutions.

Queſt. Is there alſo a diſpenſation of this Pardon, in *Prieſtly Abſolution?*

Anſw. Yes, for therein *Chriſt* has authoriz'd his *Miniſters*, that act in his place and ſtead, to pronounce the Sentence of Pardon upon all true Penitents, and bid them expect, that what they regularly thus declare on Earth, in his Soveraign Court in Heaven he will make good. *He breathed on them, and ſaid, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe ſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whoſe ſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained*, Joh. 20. 22, 23. And therefore when a true Penitent hears his Pardon ſolemnly pronounced, by an Officer, whom God has deputed and Commiſſion'd for it, he may quiet his heart, as one whoſe caſe is judged, and firmly hope God will pronounce the ſame at the laſt Judgment. But this, I ſay, he muſt do only after true Repentance. For 'tis only *the Miniſtry of Reconciliation*, ſaith St. *Paul*, which *God hath committed unto us*, 2 Cor. 5. 18. but the direction, and ratification of it, he has reſerved to himſelf; and then only ratifies what his Miniſters do, when they pronounce according to his own Rules and Orders. So that if the Prieſt pronounce by miſtake, and abſolve the impenitent, God will judge right, tho' he judge wrong, and Condemn at laſt, whom he had before erroneouſly abſolved in his Judgment.

Queſt. Chriſt ſays, *what they retain, ſhall be retained*; as well, as *what they remit, ſhall*

be

be remitted. Ought not that to beget in all Chriſtians, a great dread of Excommunication, and Reverence for Church-Cenſures?

Anſw. Yes, queſtionleſs, when they proceed upon juſt Cauſe; for then *Chriſt* will maintain the Honour of his Deputies, and make good their ſentence. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me*, Luke 10. 16. If *any Offender will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and a Publican*, Mat. 18. 17. In theſe Acts, what his Miniſters do Regularly, and according to his Direction, they do it as repreſenting him, by vertue of his Commiſſion and Authority, which, having given, to be ſure he will ſtand by. And accordingly St. *Paul*, and the *Church-Governours* at *Corinth* under him, exerciſing their Power by virtue of *Chriſt's* Commiſſion, Declares, that both in *binding*, and relaxing or *forgiving*, he acted *with the Power*, and *in the Perſon* or place *of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 5. 4,5. and 2 Cor. 2. 10.

Queſt. Do all *Cenſures* of the Church then, where the Truth is on its ſide, cut men off, as from the Church, which is his Body, ſo from *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is the *Head* of it?

Anſw. All thoſe do, which are paſſed for ſuch ſins or errors, as are Damnable by the Tenor of *Chriſt's* own Laws. For then, they only ſpeak the Language of *Chriſt's* own Rules, and, as † *Tertullian* ſays, are a

† *Apolog.* c. 39.

true

true anticipation, or *Fore-hand Draught of the great Judgment*. And when his Officers only pronounce, and ſay after him; there is no doubt, but he will confirm what they have pronounced in his Name.

Queſt. But from what you have formerly diſcourſed, I perceive that ſome things in Religon, being againſt the Prime, and Fundamental Doctrines, are ſo Damnable in themſelves, as not to be capable of any Favour or Allowances. And that others, being only againſt inferior Truths, are Damnable only as accompanied with an Evil Mind, but capable withal of being incurred under Pardonable circumſtances. Now in theſe laſt Points, many Perſons, that mean well, and ſerve *Chriſt* ſincerely, in the main and eſſentials of a Chriſtian, may yet be unhappily miſlead into wrong Opinions, or Practices. And if for their fixedneſs, and obſtinacy in theſe, they happen to be caſt out of any Church; do you think they are always cut off from *Chriſt* too, and that he will Finally *Anathematiſe*, and condemn them in his Sentence?

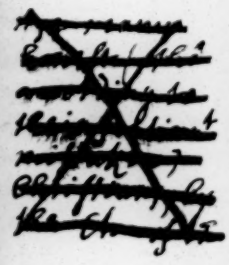
Anſw. No. For the *Church*, as all humane Judges, being unable to ſee into Mens Hearts, give ſentence in theſe caſes, according to outward Actions. But *Chriſt* in his judgment of them, looks alſo at the mind and heart of the Actors: Rateing exactly, not only the Puniſhableneſs of the Offences; but alſo the Degrees of voluntary and involuntary, which makes a Pardonableneſs

or

or Puniſhableneſs of the Offenders. And making theſe Allowances on ſuch ſcores, as fall not under their Notice; 'tis reaſonable to believe, he will ſtill own and receive ſeveral compaſſionably miſlead, who are caſt out on theſe accounts by the *Churches Cenſures.*

Queſt. This validity and effect of Church-Cenſures, you ſay, is when they proceed according to *Chriſt's own Rules*, and upon *juſt cauſe.* But if they bind where the Goſpel ſays they ſhould looſe, and Excommunicate againſt Reaſon; I ſuppoſe thoſe Cenſures are meer Scare-crows, that may ſerve to make a ſhow, but bring no hurt with them?

Anſw. Very true. *Bleſſed are ye*, ſays our *Saviour*, *when Men ſhall ſeparate you from their Company, and* expunge or *caſt out your Name as evil, for the Son of Mans ſake: for ſo perſecuted their Fathers the Prophets. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for your Reward is great in Heaven*, Luk. 6. 22, 23. If good Chriſtians are *Excommunicated* in any Church, for not going againſt the *Scriptures*, and complying with it in ill things, as poor *Proteſtants* are by the *Romiſh* Church, they loſe nothing thereby with God, who will not ratifie a wrong ſentence, but will increaſe their Reward, for having bravely ſuffer'd in his Cauſe.



Queſt. By what you have ſaid, I ſee how God forgives Sins. But when they are committed againſt us, *we* are bid to *forgive them*

too,

too, and that, as we our ſelves hope to be forgiven. I pray you what doth that imply?

Anſw. Not our remitting Future puniſhments, which lye at God's mercy, not in ours. Nor always that we ſit ſtill, without offering to defend our ſelves, when we are aſſaulted; or to ſeek redreſs, when we are injured. But only that we bear no malice to them in our hearts, and if the caſe require Redreſs, that we ſeek it not in Spiteful ways, and that, beſide the Reparation of our own Wrong, we aim not at our Adverſary's Prejudice, nor ſeek his hurt afterwards, nor Pray to God, or to the *Magiſtrate* for vengeance, as the *Jews* might to eaſe an angry mind, when we are able to do no more againſt him our ſelves.

Queſt. What uſe muſt we make of this Belief, of the *Forgiveneſs of Sins*?

Anſw. Admire the mercy of God, who can forgive ſuch Profligate, and Provoking Offenders. And the wonderful love of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who could dye to procure this Forgiveneſs, for his utter Enemies. And not deſpair of mercy, but ſtedfaſtly hope there is place of Pardon after any of our ſins. And above all, to ſhew true Repentance, and forgive others, and perform all thoſe things, which are the condition and Terms of Forgiveneſs, thereby to ſecure it to our ſelves.

Queſt. And when we are once forgiven, may we embolden our ſelves, from God's readineſs

readineſs to forgive, to *Repeat* our ſins?

Anſw. No, by no means. *Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound in pardoning? God forbid,* Rom. 6. 1,2. *Now thou art made whole, ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come upon thee,* ſaid our *Saviour,* Joh. 5. 14. Such ingratitude, and abuſe of Grace, is not only moſt provoking to the Spirit, and tempts him to withdraw from us: and calls down from God heavier, and ſurer Puniſhments: But alſo it brings in force againſt us all the old ſcores, which were all ſtruck off, as I ſaid, only on preſumption of our Perſeverance in repenting of them.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Reſurrection of the Body, and the Life everlaſting.

The Contents.

The Reſurrection not meerly of our Spirits from ſin, but of our Bodies from the Grave. This to be brought about by the Almighty Power of God. The Perfections of Glorified Bodies, viz. *Immortality, Spirituality, and Glory. The Bodies of the Wicked Immortal. And exquiſitely ſenſible. Some Inferences from the Reſurrection of our Bodies. Good Souls carried ſtraight-way into a Place of Bliſs. Of Eternal Life, wherin there is Full and unmixed Happineſs. Of the ſatisfaction of*

of their Senſes. Their clear and diſtinct Knowledge. Perfect Holineſs. And without Reluctance. Bliſsful Companions. Perfection of Love and Kindneſs. Honour, and Eminence of Place. All theſe to be injoy'd in the Higheſt Heavens, without ſatiety, or wearineſs. For evermore. Of the miſeries of the Damned, in Tormenting Paſſions. The worm of Conſcience. Fire and Flames. Diſgrace. Under all which, no favour of God. No company, but of Tormenting Devils, and damned Spirits. None to condole, when they cannot relieve. No reſt and ſleep, for Recruit of Spirits. No end of their miſeries. The Uſe of this.

Queſt. WHat is the *Eleventh* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. I believe the *Reſurrection of the Body.*

Queſt. May not the Reſurrection be interpreted, only of a *Spiritual* Reſurrection from ſin?

Anſw. So ſome taught of old, as St. *Paul* teſtifies, *ſaying the Reſurrection is paſſed already*, i. e. when Men roſe from a State of ſin, to the fear of God; and theſe, ſays he, get credit, and *overthrow the Faith of ſome*, 2 Tim. 2. 18. But the Reſurrection we expect, is a *Reſurrection of the Body.* Our Bodies, after we have laid them down by Death, ſhall at the Day of Judgment, be quickned, and raiſed up again. Then, *all that are in the Graves ſhall hear Chriſt's voice,*

and come forth, they that have done good, to the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, to the Reſurrection of Damnation, Joh. 5. 28, 29. *This mortal* Body *muſt put on immortality, and this corruptible muſt put on Incorruption,* that ſo all that being revived, which Death deſtroyed, *Death may be ſwallowed up in Victory,* 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.

Queſt. The Reſurrection of a Body which had been crumbled into Duſt, ſeemed an incredible thing when it was preach'd at firſt: *When* the Philoſophers *heard of a Reſurrection, ſome mocked,* Act. 17. 32. What can make it credible, or fit to be Believed?

Anſw. The Omnipotent Power of God, when that is ingaged for it. For no one can think it impoſſible, for God to raiſe up a Body out of duſt, that at firſt made it out of duſt, yea, that raiſed all things out of nothing. *Ye err,* ſaith our Saviour to the *Sadduces,* about the Reſurrection, *not knowing the Power of God,* Mat. 22. 29. And this Power, he has given us a ſenſible proof of; by raiſing up *Chriſt. If Chriſt be preached, that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the Dead*; i. e. in regard his Riſing is ſuch an irrefragable inſtance, and example of it: 1 Cor. 15. 12.

Queſt. Shall the Bodies of the Saints, be raiſed up by the Power of the *Holy Ghoſt*?

Anſw. Yes; he that now makes them his *Temples,* by diſplaying in them his *Holineſs* ſhall at laſt diſplay in them his *Omnipotence,*

breathing

breathing into their ſcatter'd duſt the Breath of Life, as at firſt he breathed Life into all things. *If the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in you, he ſhall* at laſt *alſo quicken your mortal Bodies*, as he quickned his, *Rom.* 8. 11.

Queſt. The Riſing of the *Saints*, will no doubt be very Glorious. But what Perfections ſhall their *Bodies* receive at the Reſurrection?

Anſw. Firſt, Immortality. Nothing after that ſhall ever be able to pain, decay, or annoy them; they ſhall not be liable to ſuffer, nor to dye any more. *This corruptible muſt put on incorruption; and this mortal muſt put on immortality*, 1 Cor. 15. 53. *They cannot dye any more*, Luke 20. 36.

Secondly, Spirituality; it is ſown a Natural Body, it is raiſed a Spiritual Body, 1 Cor. 15. 44. Whereby is not meant, that it ſhall be a *Spirit* in *Subſtance*; but that it ſhall have thoſe *Perfections of Spirits*, wherein they excel Bodies. As, 1. being *above the groſs Pleaſures of Senſe*, ſuch as Eating, Drinking, and carnal Injoyments. *In the Reſurrection, they neither Marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels*, Mat. 22. 30. And *Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God ſhall ſhortly deſtroy both it, and them*, viz. in the Reſurrection, when men ſhall live without them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. 2*dly. Vigor* and *Activity*, ſuch as may anſwer and keep pace with the vehement Tranſports, and quick Emotions of Glorified Souls, and be capa-

ble to ſupport their Joys, bear their Raptures, and expreſs their Activities. And 3*dly*, *Agility*, or *Spritelineſs* in their motions, moveing towards all Points, upwards † *into the Air and Clouds*, as St. *Paul* notes of the Saints in their new Bodies; as well as downwards: And to Places at any diſtance, with the quickneſs of Spirits; whence they are able in a moment to appear, or diſappear as the Soul pleaſes, as our *Saviour's Body* did after his *Reſurrection*, and † *our raiſed Bodies* muſt be *like his*, being in this reſpect alſo *equal to the Angels*, Luke 20. 36.

† 1 Theſſ. 4. 17.

†Phil. 3. 21

Queſt. Shall they receive any more Perfections?

Anſw. Yes, *Thirdly*, not only a perfect Beauty, inſtead of any Miſhape or Deformity, but alſo a marvellous *Brightneſs*, or *Glory*. *It is ſown in Diſhonour, but it is raiſed in Glory*, 1 Cor, 15. 43. *The Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of the Father*, Mat. 13. 43. *Chriſt ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be like unto his Glorious Body*, Phil. 3. 21. And that was full of glittering Splendor. Whilſt he converſed with his *Diſciples*, after his Reſurrection here on Earth, he laid it aſide, becauſe fleſhly eyes were not able to behold it, as appeared by its *Striking Saul blind*, Acts 9. 3, 9. But in Heaven he ſhines with a dazeling Luſtre. Thus he appeared from thence, *to Stephen*, Acts 7. 55. and to *Paul*, who deſcribes the light of his Preſence to have

have been *above the brightneſs of the Sun*, Acts 26. 13. And *his head, and his hairs were white like Wooll*, yea, *as white as Snow, his Eyes as a Flame of Fire, his Feet like fine Braſs burning in a Furnace, and his Countenance as the Sun, ſhining in its ſtrength*, in that Viſion St. *John* had of him in the *Revelations*, Rev. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Queſt. This will be a moſt happy Reſurrection of the *Juſt*: But what kind of Bodies ſhall the Wicked have? ſhall theirs be immortal too?

Anſw. Yes; but to their coſt, and for no other end, but that they may be immortally puniſhed. For when they always fry in Eternal Fire, they ſhall never be conſumed by it.

Queſt. And ſhall their raiſed Bodies be ſenſible of Torment?

Anſw. Yes; far more than their Bodies are now; and they ſhall always have the ſmarteſt, and moſt terrible things in Nature to Torment them, viz. *Eternal Fire. Depart from me ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire*, Mat. 25. 41. There they ſhall be *tormented in the Flames*, and not have ſo much, as a *drop of Water, to cool their* parched *Tongue*, Luke 16. 23, 24.

Queſt. If it be thus extream violent, it will ſoon conſume them, or, as extremity of pain ſometimes cauſes diſtraction, ſo over-power their Souls, that they ſhall not be able to mind, or attend to it?

Anſw. No; as their ſenſe of pains ſhall

be moſt exquiſite, and ſenſible, ſo ſhall their Bodies be indiſſoluble, and their ſenſe inſuperable. As an Almighty Vengeance ſhall ever inflict the moſt tormenting ſtrokes upon them: ſo at the ſame time, an Almighty Power ſhall continue their ſtrength to bear, and an exquiſite ſenſe or feeling, to be moſt piercingly affected with them.

Queſt. Muſt not this Belief of the *Reſurrection of the Body*, comfort us upon the *death of Friends*, when we lay their Bodies in the Graves?

Anſw. Yes; becauſe thoſe Bodies are not periſhed, but only faln aſleep, and ſhall be infinitely more perfect, and glorious, and full of ſtrength, when they awake out of it. *I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe, that Jeſus dyed, and roſe again: even ſo them alſo, that ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 13, 14.

Queſt. And ought it not to arm us againſt the fear of our own death too?

Anſw. Yes; for ſince, *when our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle is diſſolved, we have a Building of God, Eternal in the Heavens: in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloath'd upon, with our Houſe which is from Heaven*, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

Queſt. What is the *Twelfth*, and laſt Article of the *Creed*?

Anſw. I *Believe the Life Everlaſting.*

Queſt.

Quest. When good mens Souls leave their Bodies, what becomes of them?

Answ. They are carried into a place of Bliss and Refreshment, which *Christ*, in his discourse to the *Penitent Thief*, called † *Paradise*; and in the *Parable* of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, * *Abrahams Bosom.* And the care of conducting them thither, as *Christ* noted in the account of *Lazarus*, is committed to some good Angels. For some of these, as ministring Spirits, always attend the death-beds of God's Saints, and receive the departed Soul into their care; to guard it from all frights and molestations of envious Fiends, as it passes thro' the *Regions of the Air*, which are the † *Principality* or Territory *of the Powers of Darkness*; and to guide it in all that long passage, of new and unknown ways, which lead to the Blessed Receptacles of departed Spirits. Whereas the Souls of the Wicked, when they are thrust out of their Bodies, are left naked and defenceless, to be seiz'd by those greedy and implacable Furies, and hurried away upon the award of their most just Judge, in extream anguish and despair, to their most wretched Prisons.

† *Luke* 23. 43.

* *Luke* 16. 22.

† *Eph.* 2. 2.

Quest. But at the Resurrection, I see both Good and Bad shall return to their Bodies again. And shall that Life last for ever?

Answ. Yes; for after once they are reunited, their Souls and Bodies shall never part any more; but the good shall continue

in everlasting pleasure, and the wicked in everlasting pain.

Quest. What happiness is there, in that Eternal Life of the Righteous?

Answ. All possible happiness their hearts can wish, or their Nature is capable of. They shall see and enjoy God, who will give himself to them: and that implies every thing that is Beatifying, all the Blessedness we can imagine, and infinitely more, being contain'd in God, and communicated together with him.

Quest. And shall this Blessedness never be imbitter'd to them, with any care, or fear, or grief, or crosses, as all the happyness of this present Life is?

Answ. No; *They shall neither hunger, nor thirst any more,* Rev. 7. 16. *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more Death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor Pain,* for all those *former things are passed away,* Rev. 21. 4.

Quest. Shall all their *Senses* be gratified with the most delightful, and agreeable enjoyments?

Answ. Yes; such as the *Scripture* is wont to set off by *Feasts,* and *Banquets,* and *Marriage-Entertainments*; by melodious Songs, and joyful *Hallelujahs*; by transporting sights of all the Beauty, the Glory, and Magnificence of the Heavenly Court; the Majesty of God's Throne, and the Splendor of all the Heavenly Host that do surround it. Indeed, their exalted and refined

ned Senſes, are above the groſs delights of Eating, and Drinking, and giving in Marriage. But ſuch as theſe the *Scripture* uſes, becauſe our preſent ſtate places ſo much in them. And whatſoever delight, and ſatisfaction, they may expreſs to our preſent Capacities; that, and abundance more, ſhall the enjoyments of that life yield to our glorified and improved Bodies.

Queſt. 'Tis a great happineſs, to have *clear*, and *diſtinct knowledge* of things, and not to be diſtracted with doubts, or poſed with difficulties. Shall the Righteous in that Eternal Life, have ſuch clear and advanced *underſtandings?*

Anſw. Yes; they ſhall get rid of all darkneſs, and doubtfulneſs of mind, and know every thing they deſire, without ſtudy, or pains. *Now we ſee as in a Glaſs, darkly, but then face to face: Now we know in part, but then ſhall we know, even as alſo we are known,* 1 Cor. 13. 12.

Queſt. 'Tis a ſingular Point of Bliſs, to be perfect in *Holineſs*, which is one of the moſt Bliſsful Attributes of God himſelf. Shall they alſo be ſuch perfectly Holy Perſons?

Anſw. Yes; they ſhall excel in every Virtue, and Grace, wherein *Chriſt* himſelf doth: for *when he appears, we ſhall be like him,* 1 Joh. 3. 2. And thoſe they ſhall enjoy, free of all thoſe weakneſſes and defects, whereby their Virtues are obſcur'd, and leſſen'd in this World. For *in new Jeruſalem,*

ruſalem, the Spirits of juſt men are made perfect, Heb. 12. 23.

Queſt. And ſhall they exerciſe all this Holineſs *without trouble* and *reluctance*, which makes the practice of it painful here on Earth?

Anſw. Yes; for they ſhall neither have any inward Luſts to oppoſe it, nor outward Temptations to draw them from it. They hear no advice, nor ſee any example, but of what is good. Their inclinations are all rectified, and become Holineſs to the Lord. Their Nature is perfect in good, and duty is become their delight, ſo that in conforming entirely to the will of God, they do in the higheſt meaſure gratifie their own wills too.

Queſt. And with this height of knowledge, and of Holineſs, ſhall they alſo be *inwardly pleaſed in their own minds*, and think themſelves happy; without which, no man is happy?

Anſw. Yes; they muſt needs be infinitely pleaſed in every thing they have, and in every thing they do, for whatſoever comes to them, is pure happineſs; and whatſoever proceeds from them, is full of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, without the leaſt word, or action, to repent of. Their State is all Joy, and Peace: *enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, Mat. 25. 21. It is not bid to enter into them, being infinitely more than they can hold; but they into it, as into a vaſt Ocean of Bliſs, whereof they ſhall always

always drink to the full, but never empty or exhauſt it.

Queſt. Indeed, ſuch compleat Knowledge, and perfect Holineſs, muſt needs give them cauſe of greateſt ſatisfaction from themſelves. But what ſort of *Company* muſt they keep? will they be equally happy in that too?

Anſw. Yes; unimaginably happy. For they will live always in the preſence of God, who will ineffably Communicate himſelf to them; and of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who will infinitely rejoyce to ſee how happy he has made them; and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, who will eternally Congratulate the reward of his own Graces in them; and converſe with *Angels*, *Apoſtles*, and *Glorified Saints*, and all their Godly dear Friends, whom they valued as their own Souls, and whom they clave ſo faſt to in their hearts, that they could have followed them into the other World, when they were taken from them.

Queſt. And all this God-like Society, are every way fitted to be the moſt happy, and delightful Companions?

Anſw. Yes; to be the moſt Bliſsful, that poſſibly can be thought of. For they are all light, and quickneſs in their underſtandings; and all love, and tenderneſs in their Affections; and moſt ſweet, and obliging in their carriage, being perfectly free from all Anger, Croſſneſs, Scorn, or Contempt, and every thing that may give offence. They all look pleaſed, and inviting

ting in their countenances; and are exquiſitely wiſe, uſeful, and entertaining in all their Diſcourſes; and all agree in the ſame Opinions, and ſpeak the ſame things, and purſue the ſame ends, and are pleaſed in the ſame Objects, and have no ſtrife among them, but who ſhall love higheſt, and oblige moſt, and be moſt like to God, and agreeable to each other for evermore.

Queſt. You ſay there ſhall be no ſtrife, but who ſhall love moſt. Indeed, a ſtate of love, which is not cooled by any unkindneſſes, nor croſſed by Diſappointments, nor made unfortunate by the Follies, or Sufferings of thoſe we dearly love, is abſolutely the moſt agreeable, pleaſant, and ſatisfactory Employment in the World. And amidſt all theſe Companions, ſhall the Righteous be Perfect in this *Love?*

Anſw. Yes, moſt Perfect. *For God is Love, and he that dwells in God, dwells in Love,* 1 Joh. 4. 16.

Queſt. Will all that bleſſed Company entirely love us?

Anſw. Yes, as they do their own Souls; they were full of Love, while they lived here; loving even their Enemies, after *Chriſt*'s Precept, and Example; but eſpecially the ſervants of God, in whom they diſcern'd his Image. But in Heaven they ſhall love us in Perfection, and be full Ripe and Compleat in this, as they are in all other Graces.

Queſt. And ſhall we entirely Love all them? *Anſw.*

Anſw. Yes; they ſhall all be ſo abſolute in all amiable excellencies, and continually diſcover ſuch a boundleſs Love for us, and our Natures will be ſo wholly framed for Love and Kindneſs; that we cannot chuſe but love them, and that with the greateſt fervour, and intenſeneſs of Affection. And this will be all Pleaſure, and no Pain, becauſe they are incapable of doing any thing, that may either ſhame, or diſguſt us. God is all in all in them, and therefore they can do nothing, but what we, who entirely love God and them, may perfectly delight in.

Queſt. If we ſhall have ſuch entire Love for all the Saints in Bliſs, we ſhall, as all true Friends do, partake in all their Joys, and all their Happineſs will be ours?

Anſw. It will be ſo; for Love of Happy Perſons, multiplies Happineſs, as oft as it multiplies Objects. Becauſe, when we entirely love them, we eſteem and are pleaſed with all their Happineſs, as with our own. And this way, every Saint will be as full, as if they had a Monopoly of Bliſs, and draw all the Happineſs of Heaven to themſelves.

Queſt. But amidſt all theſe inward excellencies, and happy Company, and Bliſsful intercourſe of kindneſs, ſhall they live in *Honour*, and be *eminent in Place*?

Anſw. Yes, as *Kings* and *Princes*. They ſhall † *Sit on Thrones*, and wear * *Crowns* and *Scepters*, and be † *Sons of God*, and *Brethren*,

† *Rev.* 3. 21.
* 1 *Pet.* 5. 4.
† 1 *Jo.* 3. 1

* *Rom.* 8. 17. † *Rev.* 21. 7. *thren*, and * *Joint-heirs* with *Christ*, they *shall* † *inherit all things*, and not only have the Priviledge to stand about *Christs* Throne, but what would surpass belief, if Truth it self had not assured us of it, sit down with him thereon. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. And besides this glory of their State, and eminence in Place; their Bodies, as I observed, shall be cloathed with the most Radiant Light, and surpass even the Sun it self in Brightness.

Quest. In what place must they live, to wear these Glories, and Feast on all this immense Happiness?

Answ. In the *Heaven of Heavens*, a Place * *Eph.* 4. 10. scituate on High, † *far above all visible things*, unspeakably vast in extent, and magnificent in structure, and illustrious in Glory, the Presence Chamber of the great God, and King; where he lives incircled † 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. with Lustre, and † *Light inaccessible*, which no mortal Eye *can approach unto*, for *no Man*, (as he told *Moses*,) *can see my Face and live*, Exod. 33. 20. Here shall all Righteous Persons, with their immortal Eyes, ever see God, and shine in his Glory, and feast on all the forecited joys, and fulness of *Pleasure*, *which is at his Right hand for evermore*, Psal. 16. 11.

Quest. But if this happy enjoyment last long, will they not *grow weary* of it in the end;

end; ſince humane Appetites are wont to love change, and loath the beſt things, if held conſtant to them?

Anſw. No; as the enjoyments are, ſo is the deſire and reliſh of them, always the ſame. The Goods are pure, having no ungrateful mixtures to be diſcover'd, and taſted by time: and the Appetite and Reliſh perfect, ſubject to no ebbs or flows, no wearineſs or alterations. So that we ſhall ſtill deſire, as well as enjoy theſe pleaſant things, and find an inexpreſſible ſweetneſs, and ſatisfaction in them.

Queſt. And to Crown all, and render us ſecure in this Bleſſed State, ſhall the happineſs of it be no fading tranſitory Thing, as all worldly pleaſure is, but *everlaſting*?

Anſw. Yes; it will be always in its Spring, and look freſh, and flouriſh, thro' Eternal Ages. *The Pleaſures at God's Right Hand, are for evermore*, Pſ. 16. 11. *the weight of Glory* is *Eternal*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *the Kingdom cannot be moved*, Heb. 12. 28. the *Crown is incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 9. 25. *that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. 'Tis not a limited happineſs, held only for a term of years, or Ages, but an *Eternal Life*, 1 John. 5. 11.

Queſt. This is ſuch a perfection of Bliſs, as is enough to make all Righteous men impatient of living here, and *long to dye*, as † St. *Paul* did, thereby to be poſſeſs'd of it? † *Phil.* 1. 21, 23.

Anſw. It is ſo, indeed, if it contain'd no more

more than I have described. But when they come to enjoy it, they will find infinitely more than I have said, yea, than any Tongue can express, or heart imagine and apprehend. For *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the heart of man*, to conceive *the Things God has prepared for those that love him*, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Quest. I perceive, how Blissful the Eternal Life of the Righteous is. But the Wicked too shall be raised to an Eternal State, and what shall their Life be?

Answ. The most *perfect misery*, both of *Body* and *Soul*, whence in *Scripture*, when by *Life* is meant, not only the *continuance in being*, but the *happiness* of it, their state is call'd *everlasting death*, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 2. 11.

Quest. What sorrow and torment shall the Wicked for ever endure in their *Souls?*

Answ. The torment of all *vexatious Passions*, being continually wracked with Envy, Anger, Fruitless Cares, and Boundless Fears, utter despair of all relief, and yet extream desires of it. And the *Sting of Conscience*, which shall pierce them thro' with bitter remorse, and gnaw perpetually like a *Worm*, upon their Hearts and Vitals, *their Worm dieth not*, Mark 9. 44.

Quest. Indeed, all these mention'd Passions, when at the heighth, are so many Furies, especially *distracting* and *amazing Fears*, and *Horrors*. And shall wretched Souls be wholly seized by these? *Answ.*

Answ. Yes; as much as we may imagine they can possibly, who are surrounded on every side with the most mischievous and spiteful Enemies, and are left among them in the *Dark*, which, were it possible, would magnify their Fears by fancy, and make them infinite. To express which utter uncomfortableness, and insecurity, they are said *to be cast into utter Darkness*, Mat. 22. 13. and *reserved unto Blackness of Darkness for ever*, 2 Pet. 2. 17.

Quest. What is implyed in the *Worm of Conscience*?

Answ. Bitter, and cutting remorse, for their own wretched folly, which has call'd down upon them those intolerable miseries, and utter and horrid despair, of ever removing or abating them.

Quest. Is this *Sting of Conscience* so extreamly tormenting to mens Souls, that it should be compared to a *Worm*, preying upon their vitals?

Answ. Yes; for they who feel it, and such only can tell the smart of it, think it more exquisite and insupportable, than the pangs of death it self. And therefore they run greedily after Death, and seek by any means to make away themselves, in hopes thereby to get quit of it. *The Spirit of a man will sustain all other his infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. And if 'tis so intolerable here, where they have only some beginnings, and small fore-tastes of it: what must it be,

when horror is at the heighth, and deſpair and anguiſh is conſummate, and the rage of all infernal Spirits is let looſe, to repreſent at full the moſt formidable Phantaſms, and imprint Anguiſh, and all ſorts of Agonies and painful Horrors, with the utmoſt activity of Furious and powerful Spirits, as it will be in the next World.

Queſt. But whilſt their forlorn Souls are racked with all theſe horrible pangs, what ſhall become of their *Bodies*?

Anſw. They ſhall *Frye in Flames*, as I ſaid, and endure all the Torment, which men can feel in the *hotteſt Fire*. *They ſhall be caſt into a Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13. 42. and *have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*, Rev. 21. 8.

Queſt. This muſt needs cauſe exceſſive pain. But ſhall they not have ſomething to mitigate, and make it eaſier?

Anſw. No; not ſo much as a *drop of water to cool their Tongue*, when 'tis parched and *tormented in the Flame*, Luke 16. 24. Nor, that poor relief of thoſe, who are extream weary, and ſore, to ſhift ſides, or change their poſture. *Bind him hand and foot*, that he cannot ſtir, ſays our *Lord*, when he Condemns the Sinner to this *Lake of Fire*, Mat. 22. 13.

Queſt. And ſhall *deſperate ſhame*, and *diſgrace*, be added to all this?

Anſw. Yes; For they are all as vile and hateful, to God, and all good men, yea, and

and to themſelves too, as they can be made; and it is purely their own wilful and wretched Folly, and deſperate wickedneſs, which has brought them to it.

Queſt. But will not God, the hope and comfort of all that are in utter diſtreſs, look upon them, and ſhew them countenance, in this wretched ſtate?

Anſw. No; they ſhall never ſee his face, nor receive the leaſt glimpſe of favour from his Countenance. *He will ſay to them, depart from me ye Curſed*, Mat. 25. 41. And *they ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the Preſence of the Lord*, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. He will not look upon them, but in wrath and fury, and never think of them in mercy any more.

Queſt. But when God deſerts them, ſhall they be quite forſaken? or, will they not be allowed ſome *Company* in this diſtreſs?

Anſw. Yes; but that ſhall be the *Company of Devils*, and *tormenting Spirits*, who thirſt more after Blood, than ever the moſt ſtarved Appetite did after food: and who have no other way, to eaſe their own pains, but by the ſatisfaction of augmenting theirs. *Go into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41.

Queſt. But amidſt all this horrid Crew, that take ſuch pleaſure to deſpite them, ſhall there be none to help them, when they are unable to help themſelves, at leaſt to *pity*, and *condole* with them?

Anſw, No, there are none, but Partners

in deſtruction, who are all too full of their own miſeries, to attend theirs. And all theſe in Nature are perfect Furies, that have no love and tenderneſs for others. For Hell is no place for pity and kindneſs: ſince *he that dwells in Love, dwells in God*, as St *John* ſays, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. So that there they ſhall have no Friend, either to help, or hearten, or ſympathize with them. But all about them ſhall ſpitefully vex and reproach them, and add more to their burden, which is already heavier, by far, than they can bear.

Queſt. But there is one thing ſtill, that, in the extreameſt Torments, gives ſome eaſe and recruit of Spirits, tho' it cannot give a full deliverance, and that is *Reſt* and *Sleep*. And ſhall not miſerable wretches have ſome reſt from theſe Torments?

Anſw. No; for *the ſmoke of their Torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no reſt, day nor night*, Rev. 14. 11.

Queſt. But if this Torment, be thus without all intermiſſion, and thus violent, ſure it will not *laſt long*, but they will come in good time to an end of it?

Anſw. No, it ſhall never end. Their Bodies, as I noted, ſhall be made indiſſoluble, and immortal, only that their pains may be immortal. *Their worm dieth not, and their Fire never ſhall be quenched*, Mark 9. 43, 44.

Queſt. Good God! how intolerable, and irremediable is this State? will not every man

man, that believes he ſhall unavoidably ſuffer all this for perſiſting wicked, take any pains, and endure any hardſhips in Religion, and the amendment of his Life, to prevent it?

Anſw. Yes; moſt certainly, and this is the wiſe uſe we are to make of it. *Knowing the Terrors of the Lord*, in executing the Wicked after the laſt Judgment, *we perſwade men* to live well here, without which there is no avoiding them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.

Queſt. And ſince the happineſs of the Righteous, is ſo infinitely laſting, and large; muſt not the belief of that, make us contemn all the ſhort pleaſures of Sin, which would bereave us of it; and think all the ſufferings of Virtue, nothing in compariſon of the reward, that doth attend it?

Anſw. Yes; for ſince *the ſufferings of this preſent Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us: neither Death, nor Life, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, nor any other Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 18, 38, 39.

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